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The Mind of a Child

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The Mind of a Child

By

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THE MIND OF A CHILD

FOREWORD

I FEEL as though I were bound to make some apology for adding yet another book to those already written about children. One scarcely passes a day without picking up or seeing advertised a book dealing with this subject. And I am anxious here, at the beginning, to enter, not an apology perhaps, but an explanation of why I have been led to write this book.

I have written books about children before, though not quite on the same lines. I have been struck during the last few years by the way in which we are gradually drifting away from the subject of *children* and concentrating all our attention upon *the child;* this is not peculiar to myself, I know. I read a very charming paper not long ago, though I believe it is some years since it was written, in which some words of this kind occurred: "We are quickly getting to the point at which children will exist for us no longer, and all our attention will be centred on 'the child,'"

and the writer pointed out how, in our contemplation of childhood, we were yielding ourselves to the fascination of treating the child as though he were made and put before us for our own edification, as an object on which to expend our powers of analysis and criticism, to experiment upon with the result of our own special scientific knowledge.

My only apology for adding yet another to the many treatises on this subject is that I do not approach it from the point of view that I have indicated. My argument is that while we busy ourselves in the why and wherefore of a child's action, while we classify and dissect children in a fashion which no doubt has its fascination and interest for ourselves, we are losing sight of the most important side of childhood.

I do not want to stray beyond the limits of my present line of argument, but I think without going into the region of very abstruse thought we may see — we have only to look at the scientists around to prove it — that we are terribly apt to lose sight of the spiritual aspect of a thing when we begin to consider its scientific aspect. Do not let us do this with the children. It is bad enough to do it with sticks and stones, but with children — with what is going to be the motive

power of the world, with what is going *to be* the world, — let us pause and think very deeply before we commit ourselves to any line of thought which can put us on the wrong track with them. As I said, I do not want to get abstruse, but it is safe, surely, to say that unless the scientific aspect of anything comes second to, works side by side with, and comes out of its spiritual aspect, we must go wrong. The science of childhood which we need is a science which treats of children, first as a whole, from the point, that is, of childhood, and which treats of "the child" afterwards. And in treating of "the child," there are so many things to be considered, its circumstances, heredity, where childhood ends, what childhood is, and many other things, that I am firmly convinced that we are beginning at quite the wrong end when we attempt to classify, to analyse, before we have settled a hundred other things far more important.

I think that some, on reading the above paragraph, might say, "What childhood is? — just so, that is what we are trying to find out." This is true, but my contention is that we are trying to find out in the wrong way, or rather that we are, in trying to find out, arriving at a wrong conclusion.

This is why I have said what I say here in this book. I have made some little attempt to answer this question, "What is childhood?" But before going on to this I want to go back to what I have said earlier about our regard of children as factors in the world, for I believe that it is very largely owing to a false regard of children as such, that we are getting near a point where we can dare to treat them as though they were put before us mainly as a subject for analysis and classification.

I have said that we are losing sight of the aspects of childhood which matter most; we do not deny importance to children, but we give great value to their least important and neglect their most important aspect. I do not think that we can approach any discussion of children in a useful manner until we have once for all made up our minds that nothing in the world is comparable in importance with children. But it is one thing to say this, and another to subject childhood to a species of analysis and classification which is attractive to ourselves from a scientific point of view. Some analysis, some classification, there must be, but the motive for these should be founded on our love for and interest in children as creatures who are eventu-

ally to have a say in the destiny of the world, not founded upon our love of scientific research.

Child-analysis is a fascinating study, and a great many of us are apt to cover our real reasons for following it by a pretence to ourselves and others that it is from love of children that we take an interest in the why and the wherefore of their thoughts and actions. This may be the case to a more or less extent with many of us ; but the sort of child-analysis which I decry is not due alone to the only right reason for which it should exist for us, but is due largely to giving importance to a side of childhood which should have but little importance given to it, sinking gradually out of sight the real reasons for which we should respect childhood.

I am not asking that less attention should be given to children, I am asking that they should have far more than they have ever had yet, I am pleading for a recognition of their true place in the world.

Living my life, as I do, surrounded by children, I have come gradually to the point of seeing that it is owing to a false idea of children that we have arrived at such a false idea of marriage. It is because we do not realise the importance of children that marriage does not take its true place in the

world. I have not written this book with the idea of making it in any sort a discussion upon the ethics of marriage, but I find it impossible to begin any discussion at all about children without first clearing the ground by some elucidation of this question of the relation of childhood to marriage. If I say that there is nothing in the world so important as childhood, I find myself faced with the truth, as I believe it, that it is the absolutely mistaken way in which we look at what I may call the natural presence of children among us which leads us to a wrong view of the whole question of childhood.

When we begin to give children their true importance, then parentage immediately begins to assume its true importance also; and having arrived at this point, we find that parentage begins to bear its right and real relationship to marriage.

In the question of parentage we have turned nature upside down. Through looking at one aspect only of a matter which has several aspects we have come to regard children chiefly as an outcome of a necessary indulgence to ourselves. We have taken certain natural desires and treated them as though they centred in ourselves and were thus an end in themselves. We are most

apt to forget another, and far more important side of the question, we forget that if these desires centre anywhere, it should be in the children who are intended to be the outcome of their satisfaction, we forget that the end for which these desires were implanted is the peopling of the earth.

It is for this reason, I think, that we have grown into such a mistaken manner of regarding our duties as parents; it is for this reason that we are contented with such a low standard of parentage.

To make this possible we have done a wicked thing; we have, in the contemplation of marriage and its possibility of children, separated in our minds the natural and the spiritual aspect of childhood. If, in thinking of the union of a man and a woman, we thought seriously of how such a union would, in all probability, result in adding to the world's numbers certain others who would one day take their own individual share in making that world a better or a worse world for their presence in it, our regard of children and, incidentally, our regard of marriage would undergo a great change. As potential parents we hold in ourselves the germs of what is hereafter going to rule the world, what we bring into the world *is*

the world. Is the world going to be good or bad? Is it going to be intemperate, blasphemous, and dishonest, or is it going to be high-minded, controlled, and pure? For it is on us, on us as parents, that an answer depends.

We have such an incomplete, narrow, selfish way of looking at the question of marriage. Two of our friends enter into an agreement to pass their lives together. We say: "Will they be happy together?" We do not say: "Will they make good parents?" With a great increase of openness of thought and speech on natural matters we still keep a foolish so-called delicacy in speaking of the possible advent of little children to two people who are contemplating marriage. And yet what other thing in their common life is of a quarter the importance? If we could get a sensible standard on this matter, I verily believe we should begin to see that a childless marriage is an incomplete union, an anomaly; and that where necessity obliges it, it should be regarded as a necessary *evil.* It seems a terrible thing to contemplate, how this lop-sided, limited way of looking at marriage has led a certain proportion of men and women into inventing plans by which childless marriages can be *assured.*

This inadequacy in the treatment of marriage

has its root, I believe we shall see, in the false view we allow children and, eventually, young men and young women to acquire of the duties of parentage. Let us suppose for a moment, that it were possible to bring up every boy and girl to regard themselves chiefly as potential parents. We can see at once how different in the eyes of the world the aspect of married relationship would become. This, of course, is not altogether possible or desirable, but it is very possible indeed to bring up a child so to live his life that he eventually brings to his contemplation of marriage such qualities of mind that he will not embark on a life of union with another without having taken duly into consideration the responsibilities which it involves. And to appreciate this is in no way to think less of the importance of love as a necessary ingredient of true marriage. We do not, in learning to be wise, learn to be less loving. Undoubtedly, we learn to be less prone to "fall in love" for superficial and meretricious reasons, but what is this but all to the good? A well brought-up boy sees the necessity of using his powers of self-control and prescience on this matter of marriage as much as he uses them in regard to any other bodily desire; he may not find it quite as easy a thing to do, but we do not

train our boys to waste themselves in doing easy things.

I think very many of us make a mistake in the beginning by thinking only of children as children, as though, that is, childhood were a thing complete in itself. When the children are there we busy ourselves in contemplating them as children. We may be glad to have them or we may not, but it is a rare thing to find people who look upon children as material out of which will be formed the good and the evil of the world which is coming.

"Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart therefrom," that is to say, if every child were brought up properly, wickedness would cease from off the face of the earth. I do not mean that we should all be perfect, the mistakes we all must make in the process of gaining our individual experience of life would prevent that, but downright, deliberate wickedness would cease. If every child were taught to be temperate, drunkenness and gluttony would cease; if every child were taught to be reverent, blasphemy would cease; if every child were taught to be self-controlled, evil passions of all kind would be held in check. Of course it is easy to see that a state of things in which all chil-

dren were taught to be temperate, reverent, and pure is a Utopia which it is far from possible to realise, but, on the other hand, it is not difficult for thinking men and women who look round either on their own or their friends' families of children to realise that we do not think enough of the future of our children; I do not mean their active future, the future in which they will *do*, but the future in which they will *be*, of which they will be a part and a part which must inevitably work for good or evil.

There is no shirking it; as we train our children, so are we responsible for the welfare of the world of the future; we cannot leave them alone, they cannot stand still, they must go backwards or forwards, and on us, on us alone, depends the result.

At present the chief objection which men and women have to becoming parents is lack of means with which to bring children up "properly." There are other, more selfish and more sordid reasons which make men and women avoid having children, on these I do not want to enlarge. By "properly," we mean the children's upbringing in such matters as cost money — nurses' wages, food, instruction and so forth. But the objects in our children's education which cost money are but

a very small part of the whole of that for which we need equipment in our responsibility as parents. When we regard ourselves as parents we content ourselves, as is so often the case in other matters, with looking at the one aspect of an affair which has many aspects. Here are the children, any amount more to follow if we don't stop them, here am I and my wife, here is my income and my prospects.

It is easy to say, and it is the obvious thing to say, and I am sure that people who think and act in the way I have indicated above have heard it said a dozen times, that we ought not to think of putting ourselves in such a position that we may become parents until we have assured ourselves that we possess the necessary qualifications, health, income, prospects, and so forth. We know of what use such arguments are. But I do believe that if we looked at childhood rightly, at the real, the incomparably great responsibility it entails upon us, we should then shrink from marriage until we were in a position to bring up children properly. Properly in the highest sense. Of course the nurses' wages, the cost of instruction, good food, suitable clothing, reasonable recreation, these things that cost money, are all important enough, but only and solely important

as a background to the real education, the education which means the fitting of a child with the weapons he will need as a man if he is to be a man whom the world will be the better for possessing.

And the world in general will have no chance of regarding this question rightly till we begin to get into the education of our children a very different standard of thought as to marriage and the birth of children. I think there are but few people who would not think one was doing something extraordinary in speaking to children of their future responsibilities in these directions, and yet I venture to say that one can scarcely begin too early to let something of a serious regard of both these matters find its way into our conversations with our children. I do not mean that we should drag such subjects unnecessarily into our usual conversations, but that gradually and (to the children) insensibly they should become familiar thoughts and that the familiarity should be that of reverence and respect. One can hardly read a letter, tell a story, recount a piece of history, sacred or profane, without coming upon some reference to marriage or parentage, and every occasion is an opportunity for us of treating these subjects with the respect which belongs to them. Marriage and the birth of

children should never be treated lightly in the presence of children, indeed in whose presence should they ever be treated lightly? Are they not the most serious things in the whole of this world's economy? It is largely, almost I think we might say entirely, owing to this frivolous, untrue way of regarding marriage that our wrong way of looking at childhood has arisen. There is a great deal to be altered in this matter, there is much food for most serious reflection in the way we allow our children to grow to young manhood and young womanhood with no teaching about, with never a serious thought upon, the two most important crises which their lives can contain. But, beyond imploring my readers to think seriously on this question for themselves, I do not want to go further than to point out the effect which such a want of education on these subjects has upon the world's regard of children. How it belittles them, how it degrades childhood from being the highest factor in the world's economy, to an accidental, hap-hazard possibility. And if this be so, can we set about the work of our children's education as we ought? We do not take them seriously enough. And the people who do take them seriously, do not take them with the right

kind of seriousness, they regard them as an object of study, not as an object of hope, of hope that we may through and in these children help the world forward, make it hereafter a little more humane, a little more temperate, a little more spiritual.

Comparatively speaking, nothing in the world matters but the children, and no pursuit or occupation in which men and women engage can be compared in importance with the bringing up of a child.

If we could lay to heart the obvious truth that the children of now are the world of twenty to forty years hence, and if we further realised that while they are children, we can practically do what we like with them, we can see to some extent where our responsibilities land us.

Having, I hope, cleared just enough ground to, so to speak, "take off" from, I should like to come at once to the main points on which I hope to get a hearing in this book. My hope is to stir up in the minds of my readers some doubt as to whether — granting that our regard of them from the "natural" point of view is not altogether a sound one — our education of children, morally and spiritually, could not be bet-

tered. One says again and again that there is no such thing as the eventual separation of mind and body, they act and re-act upon one another continuously as long as life exists. But, from our own (ours, that is, as distinguished from children's) point of view, we can make a very distinct line between what we may call our natural duties and our spiritual duties to childhood. One might put the line where our animal (I do not mean "bestial") nature ends and our spiritual nature begins. From the merely animal side of the question we have duties which we do not carry out with anything like the duteousness of the brute-creation whose traditions we profess to have long ago improved upon. Just on this point alone we should do well to consider, to note what of prescience and self-denial we have left to the brute-creation while we have improved it away from ourselves. Instinctive qualities with the brutes these may be, and instinctive they ought to be with us, and — owing to our difference from the brutes — they ought to be far more and far better than instinctive.

This is, I think, entirely true as regards what I have called the natural aspect of children. It bears only indirectly upon the moral and spiritual aspect of childhood, an aspect which belongs to

our higher natures, that part of us where instinct bears practically no part at all.

If it is difficult to draw a line between the natural and the moral, it is impossible to do so between the moral and the spiritual. People are always trying to do it: they see the necessity of a certain high standard of morality if the human race is to prosper; they are afraid to face the possibilities which belong to a degenerate morality; and they don't want to be bothered with thinking out the ethics of the spiritual; they don't want to be forced into looking into what lies beyond their own ken, into what it all "comes from," into what is the motive power behind it all. And so they try to pretend that so long as we are moral it does not very much matter whether we are spiritual or not, let us keep certain laws, and our spiritual nature, if there is such a thing, will take care of itself.

I will defy any one to keep within these limits who has had much to do with children, if they approach the subject of childhood in any true manner. And I will say at once that I write with no idea that a division of the moral and the spiritual is possible. I cannot conceive any system of moral education which is not continually pressing through to, leaning back upon the spiritual. I have called this book, "The Mind of a Child."

To me, this mind centres in, is a part of this spiritual existence.

It is my most earnest hope that I may be able to say something which will bring some light to bear upon this question. I think that if in the process of educating others we do not ourselves gain education, our methods must be exceedingly poor ones. Moral education is intensely important, it is a subject which cannot be too deeply studied. But an education which centres in ourselves, in the limited area of the world around us, must be absurdly incomplete. The importance of moral education lies in the fact that through it and by its means we can truly reach the significance of the spiritual.

This is infinitely true in its application to the education of children.

CHAPTER I

I DO not suppose that there has ever been a time when children, as such, have received quite as much attention as they do now. Quite lately, almost within the last few years, we began to awake to the knowledge that our ideas on the education of children were not quite as sound as they should be. We began to see that the matter was not as simple as we were wont to consider it, that children had personalities which existed none the less for our persistent efforts to ignore them. It would be interesting, no doubt, to follow from quite early times the history of the education and treatment of children by their elders, but I fancy it would be an extremely difficult task to carry out. Our own childhood, the childhood of our parents, even of our grandparents, the childhood of this or that famous person, we can gather some idea of; but childhood in the abstract, childhood as such, has, until quite latterly, not been a study which recommended itself to the minds of grown-up persons.

There was, no doubt, much that was false in the manner in which children were, in days now gone by, considered by their elders; children were looked upon as creatures apart, a set of little beings who, while they *were* children, had to be got through the troublesome time of childhood with as little inconvenience to their elders as possible. One idea — in the consideration of children — was paramount: Children must be taught to know and "keep their place." The whole question was attacked from the grown-up point of view; the inferior strength and ability of the children made this possible, and this was enforced. Now that we are beginning to see that the children have "rights," we are, of course, in danger of going too far the other way, — this is inevitable and will, no doubt, right itself in time. We are apt to leave a wrong unchecked until it has gained such dimensions that it needs enthusiasts to undertake the righting of it, and enthusiasts always overshoot the mark. A transition stage is harder to bear than the period of wrong-doing which preceded it; an over-stretched string, an over-bent bow quivers and shudders on relaxation for a while before it resumes its normal position. And besides this, our eyes are wide open and closely directed to the spot where the

wrong has been, we see even too clearly, our straining gaze exaggerates and distorts. And I think that this is all true as regards the present state of mind that we — those of us, that is, who believe that in the past, the *general* treatment of children has been wrong — are in as regards our attitude to the children around us. And I think we should be wise to try and find out for ourselves, first, what has been wrong in the treatment of children hitherto, and, next, whether we are taking the best steps possible to put that wrong right. I do not think it should be very difficult to discover what is wrong, provided we set to work with all due humility and with a determination to respect what was earnest in those who in the past have had the education of children; this is not a very easy attitude for enthusiasts to take up, but it is a necessary one if they are to do good work, and they must carry it also into the work of reformation. We may without hesitation assume that our methods are bound not to be altogether perfect; the more enthusiastic we are, the more carefully we need to look into our motives and into our practice.

To get a clear start, I think we should ask ourselves definitely this question: What is childhood, where does it end? At first sight this does not

appear such a difficult question to answer; but I believe that a good deal of our embarrassment as to the proper regard of children, I believe that very much of the false idea of children's education in the past, has lain in the fact that they have been regarded as children just so long as their inferior strength made them liable to compulsion. There is no fixed time at which one can say of childhood: Here it ceases. I do not mean that one cannot say it of this or that particular child, but of childhood in general. Putting it roughly, one would say that boys cease to be children at twelve or thirteen, girls at fourteen or fifteen; this only means, I fancy, that boys begin to do as they choose at the former age, girls at the latter. But is not this a very arbitrary and foolish distinction? If we say that a child ceases to be a child when it is grown-up, we should find that, physically, childhood ceased from the ages of nineteen to, say, twenty-five; whereas morally and mentally childhood never ceased. Here, I think, we come to the crux of the matter. In the style of education which is now gradually passing out of date, the physical side of childhood was all that was really reckoned with. The fact that children were physically weaker than ourselves enabled us to lay down certain rules for them which indirectly affected

their moral and mental welfare, and there our jurisdiction practically ended. From this system such axioms as "Little children should be seen and not heard," "Youth should respect age," developed themselves, as did too the habits of respect, such as the addressing of parents as "Sir" or "Ma'am," the rising on the entrance of an elder, the curtseyings of girls when presented to a stranger. Now, all this is being changed and, incidentally, with the swing of the pendulum — as much too far in the one direction as it was before in the opposite direction — we are in danger of finding that we are doing the children as grave an injustice in our way as our parents and grandparents did in theirs. In our impatience at seeing children made slaves, we are in danger of putting it out of their power to learn how to become servants. In our scorn of a method which gave no certainty of any grace within, we — in sweeping away the outward signs — run a clear risk of discounting modesty and reverence altogether. We have taken away the children's part, the outward deference of speech and manner, are we taking pains to replace it by our part, the teaching of the true meaning of such virtues as these outward marks were meant to typify? This, however, is somewhat beside the object of my present argu-

ment; the point I want to put clearly is that we are right in thinking that much was wrong, we are right in trying to alter things for the children; and having said that, I want to try and show that the reason for what was wrong is a reason which we have by no means, in our search for remedies, removed.

There is a small section of thinking men and women, a section which is gradually increasing, which — on the question of child-education beginning to interest many who had hitherto acquiesced in the "old fashioned" system — have evolved a sort of science of child-study which centres itself upon the mind of a child *quâ* child. This is, I should imagine, a fascinating and interesting study for ourselves, but I cannot see how it can in any way, now or hereafter, help the children. A science can only be founded upon rules formed from collective experience; there are points of uniformity in childhood upon which such rules might be founded, but it is not these points which are engrossing the followers of this science of child-study. I cannot see that there is any possibility of forming a science for discovering why children, *as children*, do this, that, or the other, for here you are trying to encounter the mind of the child, and the mind of a child *is* nothing.

There is only one quality in childhood on which we may reckon in our dealings with children, on which we may make deductions, form rules, found a science, and that quality is physical youth. The French have always taken a great interest in childhood, and they approach it largely from its æsthetic side; this element of physical youth appeals strongly to them, it is an element which children share in common with the whole animal creation, and Adrien Marie's pictures of children delight us in just the same way as do Madame Ronner's pictures of kittens. This aspect of childhood is very, very charming, and it is one which we enjoy, and do right to enjoy. But it is as evanescent as the bloom of the apple-tree; it is not to be reckoned with when we are seriously thinking of children as embryo men and women of the world of the future.

And yet we have said that this is the only quality which we can depend upon in our dealings with children, as children.

The point I want to be able to put with conviction to my readers, especially to those who are bitten with the craze for child-analysis, is that there is no chance of our getting at a right standard in our ideal of child-education so long as we are looking at it with the idea of con-

sidering children, as children. We must think of them as only passing through stage after stage on a road of life which will never be completed. Physically, there is such a thing as being grown-up; every living thing reaches, physically, a state of completion and because of this fact we are able, physically, to form a science, to argue, to deduce. But mentally and morally there is no such thing as being grown-up; never are we in such a condition that progress is not an element of that condition.

Clear away from a little child the glamour of physical childhood, and we find only raw, undeveloped material, passing through a transitory stage which, in itself, is only a preparation for the stage to come, a stage which when reached is, again, only a preparation for another. Here we have no ground from which to argue, on which to raise a science; there are here no points of uniformity where collective experience can speak; and yet it is just here that we elders are trying to force ourselves in.

I have spoken broadly and generally to enable me to get my argument clear; of course we may see readily that such an arbitrary division of mind and body will not hold good for any distance along any discussion. In the minds of children

there are points of uniformity where rules may come in; this is especially true at points where (one may, I think, say baldly) the mind and body comes nearest to touching the intellectual part of a child's mind where he "learns lessons;" here we may make rules which will, more or less, suit all children, and even if we go further still, we find traces, more or less slight, of "family likenesses" of mind to mind upon which, again, we can found some sort of a science. But I want to say here, before I start the main body of my argument, that all this region of the mind which heredity might influence, which might be, so to speak, *passed on*, is not the region to which the research of the disciples of "child-study" is directing itself; it is directing itself to the point where no uniformity can exist, for the individuality of a child centres in something which belongs to the child alone. It is on the point where no uniformity exists that we are trying to turn the search-light of discovery.

And in this we must fail; for the part of a child's mind which I have called his Individuality, the part where live his *reasons for doing things*, is entirely and absolutely out of our reach, it is nothing whatever to do with us, it is the child's business and his alone.

I believe it is the lack of respect which the minds of children have met with in the past that has led to the mistakes in their education; I believe that we are in imminent danger of making quite as great mistakes as our forbears have done. In directing our attention to the fact that children have minds which command our consideration, we are in danger of thrusting ourselves in at a point where interference is an impertinence greater than any mistake of which our forbears were guilty.

The reason, I think, for the difficulty that arises here is that — as is usual in the thinking out of any science or philosophy — we are too anxious to separate the "is" from the "ought." In many cases to do this does not matter, and in all cases it is necessary to do it in carrying our argument to a certain point; but when we are considering children, we must only go a very little way before we begin to mix the scientific with the moral. We make rules for children, and we know why we make them; the child obeys them either because he does, or because he ought, or for both reasons; we know why he ought, we do not know why he does. This child-analysis which I deprecate is over-busy about the reason why he does; this is out of our dominion; but in our dominion,

immensely and irrevocably in it, is the reason why he ought. And it is here, where the game is in our hands, that we fall so short of our duty. We admire certain virtues, we see them represented in certain men and women; we have at hand, founded on collective experience, certain rules that we can go upon in educating our children into the acquisition of these virtues; these rules we can make and enforce. *In us* lies the motive power; it is ourselves we want to analyse, not the children. We want to make it clear to ourselves why, in the education of our children, we do this, that, or the other, make and enforce this, that, or the other rule. We want to make rules for ourselves before we venture to make them for others; that the children are younger and weaker than ourselves is only a reason why we should the more diligently search ourselves so as to make sure that we are not recklessly using our weapon of superior age and strength.

I have said that this science of child-study may be fascinating and interesting to ourselves, but that I cannot see in what way it can be helpful to children; the only thing that matters to them is that we should assist them to grow from happy children into happy men and women; as the only happy men and women are those who are at work

on the improvement of the world around them, so the only thing that matters to us, in our contemplation of children, is that we should teach them while they are young and plastic, such habits as will most conduce to virtue. For this we have rules for our own guidance, and use them we must. For this we have rules to lay before the children, and enforce them we must. Beyond this, as regards the children, analysis is vain.

Writing, then, as I shall, on the assumption that our one duty to the children around us is to teach them an appreciation of virtue, I find myself still faced with more than one difficulty. It is not hard to say what virtue is, this experience has taught us, and it is not hard to divide virtue into different expressions, obedience, loyalty, reverence, and so forth. But it is hard to see clearly the methods for applying to the education of a little child the stern lessons of morality and virtue. But I do earnestly believe that this difficulty lies largely in the fact that we regard childhood quite wrongly in regarding it as a thing *in itself;* the attributes of childhood are to some extent tangible, but the various stages of childhood itself are only to be regarded as stepping-stones to something else, and that something else is the eventual acquisition of virtue.

When we are thinking of the whole question of moral education, let us look at the children *en masse*, let us look at the world *en masse*. Let us realise that in us alone lies the power of touching, *through the children around us*, the world of the future. The delicious graces belonging to physical immaturity are consequent on the immaturity itself; the immaturity is our occasion for help; it is entirely right that we should love and should joy in the sweetness of the scent of the flowers, but is this to prevent our realising the importance of the fruit?

Children don't need to be *made* happy; a healthy child is, of itself, a happy being, its joy in existence is the prerogative of its youth. When we find ourselves saying: "I feel quite young again," we might with equal truth say: "Living is itself, for some reason, just at this minute, a sheer delight." And it is this in children that delights both themselves and us, joy in living. But, left to itself, this joy so soon becomes worthless, so soon turns to discontent. Children are not kittens and puppies; pleasure does not lie with them in the gratification of this, that, or the other bodily want. They are not growing into cats and dogs; they are growing into beings who cannot know what happiness means unless they are

living in such a manner that virtue is lying in front of them as a possession to be desired more and more ardently as the days, months, years gather behind.

And our part is surely this, and this alone, to see to it that we live, as regards the children, in such a manner that the attainment of virtue may become, because of our association with them, the prime object of their lives.

CHAPTER II

THERE is, at the very outset, one most helpful and delightful reflection with regard to the education of little children. Teaching a child to do right is in itself teaching it not to do wrong.[1]

And this fact, that learning to love right is the only true way of learning to avoid wrong, ought to force us into seeing that moral education can never begin too soon.

Every day that a child is not learning to do right, even in and from its very cradle, it is learning to do wrong, and we have to show a child the face of sin in himself only because we ourselves have allowed sin to grow in the child's heart.

We must realise at the start that a little child does not instinctively choose the right; no one makes an effort instinctively unless it is to gain an easily-seen advantage. The advantage of doing

[1] It is in realising this that we can see where comes in the mistake of those who make the moral education of children such a gloomy affair. To try to make a child good by showing him the horrors of evil is as though we were to try to teach a child to love the sunlight by shutting him up in a dark cavern.

right is by no means easily seen, it lies quite out of our immediate ken. That is to say, a certain degree of development, of education, is necessary before we can begin to see *why* we should do certain things. While children are little, the making of the effort to do certain things, which we, in our wider experience of cause and effect, know to be right, must be insisted upon from without. A little child will make an effort, without any interference on our part, to reach the bottle containing its milk, its instinct alone will carry it that length; but instinct is a poor thing to depend upon when we come to worthy action, and we cannot expect children, of themselves, to make efforts the advantages of which lie quite out of their immediate ken.

The curious habit we have got into of allowing ourselves to think that real education cannot begin in a child till it is, say, six or eight years old, presents the child to us at that age in such a retrograde condition that we have to begin our education by eliminating certain faults, — laziness, bad temper, greediness, as more usual ones; lying dishonesty, cruelty, as more advanced ones. If from absolute infancy a child was never allowed to gain anything by crying (a child's way of showing temper) his temper would be under

control before he left infancy behind him, and it is impossible to over-value the advantage this would be at the start of a child's career. If a little child, directly he gained the use of his hands, were never allowed to use them for the hurt of another creature, gentle treatment would become second nature to him before his strength was sufficient seriously to hurt anything. If, as soon as a child could understand anything at all, his surroundings included the appreciation, the expressed and definite appreciation, of what is beautiful and noble and true, we should not find ourselves engaged in casting out a lying spirit when, late in the day, we took up the burden of our child's education. From the moment that a child lives he is a *person*, and he must either go backwards or forwards; the entrance of life precludes standing still. Tiny steps, so tiny as to be almost imperceptible at first, but distinct steps either of progression or of retrogression mark the life of every living organism, and this movement is as true of moral, mental, and intellectual life as of physical life.

To choose the good and reject the evil — the teaching of this lesson is our most clear duty and it cannot be begun too early because only by a child beginning immediately to know what good

is can we hope that when he comes first across evil as a definite, tangible thing, he will reject it simply because it makes no appeal.

Once evil has got a hold in the heart of a person, it is hopeless to think that it can be expelled by simply pointing to good; if a child has learnt the personal advantage or pleasure that is to be gained by sin of any kind — greediness, indulgence in bad temper, lying, or cruelty — then his education involves the warnings against evil as well as the admonitions towards good. Instead of the one lesson Truth is beautiful, we have to give two; we must add Lying is hateful. We burden the child with a double effort, — the effort of grasping forward to the higher, combined with the far harder effort of casting out the lower.

The advantages that are consequent upon the practice of virtue are, as I implied earlier in this chapter, not obvious to the uneducated mind. The practice of virtue must therefore be insisted upon in the education of children while they are still too young to understand why virtue should be insisted upon. It is only in the course of time that we can hope that they may learn why the practice of virtue is a necessity, for it is only in the course of time that the consequent advantages become apparent.

This is the reason, the only reason, why unenlightened obedience to rule must be enforced in our dealings with those younger, and therefore less experienced than ourselves.

The mind of a child begins to grow immediately it becomes conscious of its surroundings and its own relation to them. Our work then, as educators, begins with the life of the child. Those years when, as a rule, our relations with the children put under our charge confine themselves to short periods when the child is, so to speak, on show to our friends, or to the times when we amuse ourselves, or indulge our parental instinct by holding the infant in our arms, those years are of the utmost importance in training the new growth of life so that it may be started on the right lines, and those years of a child's life are, as a rule, spent with persons who, being uneducated themselves, have no idea of the right training of a growing intellect.

If ever there is a period in our children's lives when they ought to be placed under the care of developed and educated minds, it is during the first years of infancy. As long as the notion prevails that the growth of a child's body is the only part of him that needs attention during the first years of his life, so long will the education of our

children on the questions of right and wrong be upside down.

While children are quite young this important mistake does not appear; with evil — as with good — the consequent results are not immediate. A little child's temper can be so easily soothed by giving it the little thing it is craving for; when that remedy fails, it is easy to say that the child is ill and to send for the doctor, or that its nurse mismanages it and so forth. A child's greediness is so readily condoned, so often made a nursery joke; a child's conceit is so often spoken of as "sharpness," so often laughed at; it is only when these little characteristics become troublesome to ourselves that they are dubbed "faults." When the temper becomes imperative and will not be satisfied with the toy or the biscuit; when the greediness leads to complaints of the food provided, to refusal to sit down to the table which is not furnished with favourite delicacies; when the conceit becomes interference with our grown-up conversation or with our own opinions; then it is that we begin to say — The girls must have a governess, the boys must go to school.

But by this time the faults *are* faults, they have become a definite dislike of virtue, a definite leaning to sin. By this time the necessity has arisen

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of casting out the evil spirit before there can be any chance of implanting the good one, and we ourselves, we in whose charge the children were put, feel ourselves incapable of the task, because we ourselves have allowed the evil to grow. A greedy child is not very likely to believe any one who tells him that selfishness is a vice, if the same person has thought it a suitable subject for joke when the child eats things he likes until he is ill. A "bumptious" child is not likely to heed the reproof of the very person whom he is accustomed to hear laugh at his "sharp sayings." The child who has always got what he wants by crying, has a very hard lesson to learn before he discovers that as soon as the gratification of his desires means inconvenience to his neighbours, he will find grown-up people very different people from what they have hitherto appeared to him.

And so we send our children away from us to get that moral education which we so easily might have given to them ourselves.

And a very important point to consider is that by this method we not only deliberately shirk our own responsibilities, but we lay a heavy burden on our children. We have of necessity doubled the element of struggle; we not only lay upon our children the burden of the struggle

which belongs to their own age, but the burden of all the fight which should have been fought in their earlier years. Human nature in its progress has in itself the element of struggle, but it should be a struggle upwards, a leaving of wrong, a lifting upwards to right. There must always be an *initial* tendency downwards as we proceed, because with our bodily development comes also a certain mental development which gives us enlightened appreciation of what our bodies are craving. It is, so to say, natural to us to be selfish. It is natural to look round for means wherewith to satisfy the desires of our body, and as those desires increase and develop, we turn our minds to the task of providing for those desires. This tendency is bound to be in a downward direction, if it is left to the instincts. It must be our care that with our children it is only an initial tendency; as such it can be dealt with by the continuous upward training. Once this tendency is left unchecked, once the definite downsteps are taken, the struggle is doubled, and the deeper the descent, the harder the eventual ascent.

Of nothing is this truer than of the vice of impurity in all its many aspects. By the very nature of our being, we have, from earliest

childhood, instincts which may readily develop into a downward tendency in a direction which leads to untold mischief. These instincts are, in themselves, like all instincts taken simply, of course perfectly as they should be; properly trained, they become a source of healthy knowledge which precludes the presence of evil; left to themselves, they become, like all other instincts, a source of evil; but there is no downward tendency in human nature so easily counteracted by early upward training, first, by the inculcation of personal cleanliness, the love of fresh air and of the lovely sounds and tints of nature; later, by the lessons of kindness to other young things, whether human, beast, or bird, later still, by a love of what is open and "above board" and a consequent drawing away from secret talk and acts. A child who has been trained to love truth in the sense that he has been trained to show himself to those he loves and to those who love him, cannot lie if he has been taught the meaning that love should bear in our relations to each other. The child who has been taught to care for and foster that which is younger and weaker than itself, will find cruelty impossible. The child who has been taught to love fresh water, open air, light, and freedom will not pervert natural

instincts into impure thoughts, secret words, and acts.

I do not wish in what I have hitherto said to imply that this process of education means an easier task to ourselves than does the more usual method; on the contrary, I should feel inclined to say it means, in one sense, a more difficult task, — one, that is, requiring more tact, more care, and more ceaseless watch than we are ordinarily disposed to think necessary; but it would mean an immense lightening of the burdens of our children, an immense improvement in their moral calibre; and for ourselves too, there is, if we look at the question all round, a distinct eventual advantage. By the method of leaving a tendency alone until it has become a fault, and by further leaving a fault alone until it has become a vice, we lay up for ourselves a bitter punishment for the carelessness and shiftiness of our earlier methods. This, in itself, works out to our own distinct personal disadvantage, even looking at the matter from a somewhat sordid standpoint. And to look at it in a higher and truer fashion — to take the easiest course for ourselves, whether in the education of our children or in the carrying out of any other work that we take in hand, is the course of all

others which tends to our own deterioration, to the stultification of our worthy qualities.

The part of our children's education which means most trouble to ourselves, is the part which is by far the most important and the part above all others which we are, because of the trouble involved, most inclined to shirk. There is no easier method of education than that practised by so many educators of the young, the method of letting a tendency develop into a fault and then punishing the fault, this is far more comfortable to ourselves than taking the trouble to turn and train the tendency in its earliest stages. Punishment is an easy form of discipline, and we punish recklessly, bolstering up our consciences with the reflection that the fault must be eradicated, never stopping for one moment to inquire who is to blame for the fact that the fault has developed in the child at all.

The lesson of choosing the good — this is the lesson of all lessons for us to begin to inculcate in our little children ; the normal child of twelve years old knows more about doing naughty things than ever he does of doing right. He knows well enough that he must not do this, that, or the other; he knows far better what he must not do than what he must do. And when

the time comes for sending our children into the wider world of school, a time which forces itself upon us more or less early, according to our respective methods of educating our little children, we find ourselves warning our children against the committal of various faults and vices which they are to encounter in their more extended sphere. Certain barriers which at home kept them from evil, will cease to exist on their leaving us, and our bitter cry is, "How much shall I tell them of the evil they are going to encounter?" If the children had learnt the beauty of truth, *all* lying would be rejected by them; if they had learnt the charm of showing kindness, *all* cruelty would be impossible; if they had learnt the great value of cleanliness, of openness, of light and freedom, impurity would make no appeal. The extent of the evil they might meet would make no difference; all evil would be alike as a thing to be rejected.

This is of course the picture of very high attainment, but it is the only one we should be content to look at in connection with the ideal for our children's education; and there is no lack of hard common-sense about the realisation of it. There are blind people in the world who think

that by continually looking at and reflecting upon what is right, upon what is pure, true, lovely, and of good report, they will avoid the knowledge of what is wrong and coarse and terrible. These are not the ideas we want to take with us into the business of educating our children. But we do want to see that evil in the heart of a child is nothing *at first* but an instinctive downward tendency, and that every little upward step, involving as it does a definite struggle, tends to strengthen the child's power of resistance and tends to open his eyes to the beauty of the upward path. The struggle will never cease; the tendency to take the downward path never leaves us while life is in us; but the fight should consist in a definite determination to step up, rather than in a determination not to slide down; this is true, I think, of the whole of human life; it is, of course, far harder to practise when faults and vices have got us in thrall. It is in our anxiety to help our children to such a boyhood and young manhood that choosing the good will be to them synonymous with rejecting the evil, that our never ceasing care should be directed to their earliest years.

Let us face the possible evil in our children's lives ourselves, let us train them to be prepared

themselves to face the evil in their own lives and in the lives of others; but let us also train them to meet evil boldly, to look it in the face, and turn away, because to them the true appreciation of what is high and true and pure involves a rejection of all that is in opposition to the spirit of love and truth and purity.

It is only by beginning while our children are quite little that we can hope to be able, with any completeness, to follow out this system of teaching the avoidance of wrong by the inculcation of right. Knowledge of evil comes so soon into our lives, that we, as guardians, have to "get up very early in the morning" if we are to be beforehand with it for our children.

In this world we have to prepare our children to meet the evil which already exists in the hearts and the lives of others, and it is entirely necessary that our plan of education should include knowledge of the presence of evil.

Children's own observation, whether in the things passing around them, or in their learning of the history of what is past, continually brings them into contact with, into knowledge of evil of every description. We do not want to bring up our boys and girls, as they leave childhood behind them, in ignorance of evil in any one of

the aspects in which in their lives it may come before them ; such a system is disastrous. Definitely to appreciate virtue is not to be ignorant of vice, on the contrary it is to be more aware of its presence that we may the more easily avoid it. We want to bring up our children in no muddle of half-blindness as to what is right and what is wrong; my argument is that it is in the training of children to see clearly the beauty of virtue that they also learn to see clearly, by force of contrast, the hideousness of vice when and where they encounter it.

To each child comes in degree the temptations of his age; each child should be armed to meet the temptation, *not* by a warning against the fault to which the temptation belongs, but by a training in its opposing virtue. And the great advantage of this is that the youngest child may be learning the beauty of the highest virtue, while yet its temptations are to faults which are but the merest initial downward tendencies, tendencies which, if left unchecked, will become faster and faster as years crowd on, faults indeed and speedily vices, but which while our children are little are just so many opportunities ready to our hands for their strengthening and uplifting.

CHAPTER III

IF we approach the subject of moral education[1] with the idea firmly fixed in our minds that the various rules we make are but so many stepping-stones to the appreciation of all Rule, that the various virtues we strive to inculcate are but so many stepping-stones to the possession of all Virtue, we shall find ourselves, if we follow our idea closely, at the point where we say that Obedience and Love are the two great qualities for a successful life. These two words we have continually on our lips and in our minds when we are in the presence of children. An unloving child is to us a moral anomaly; a disobedient child is — well, I hope to be able to show later that he is a moral anomaly, too. I am afraid the most we are generally inclined to think him is a great nuisance to ourselves. We have a kind of feeling about children that if they

[1] I should like to say here that the term "moral education" is not my own; I prefer to use the one word "education," but having found that among readers of other writings of mine some have understood "education" to cover only acquisition of knowledge, I am forced to this distinction.

do not love us they are horrid little creatures, whatever we may be ourselves; if they do not obey us that is another and, deep down in our hearts we confess it, a much less important matter to us. This holds good while the children are little, as they grow older we find disobedience a very serious inconvenience.

The reason why we think of an unloving child as a moral anomaly is because it is natural to children to love; they are born with this most precious instinct. The extent to which a little child shows this instinctive trust in and dependence upon others varies according to circumstances, according to inherited qualities, whether of demonstrativeness or of reticence, to family tradition and so forth — the feeling is there in the child to start with. And here, at the very outset we have — if we are really in earnest in our profession as educators — to see that this childish quality is used primarily for the child's good and not for our own enjoyment. How we love the love of a child! And yet how wickedly careless we are about it. By the time a child has gone but a few years on his life's journey, the love we spoke of in connection with his baby years has come to be called "affection;" where we should have said: "What a loving little heart," we say

now: "He 's an affectionate little chap;" — later again "good-nature" is the word employed; "He has his faults, I know — he 's rather unruly and difficult to hold in check, but he 's wonderfully good-natured." Don't we know, oh, how well, the stages? What has become of the love? It was of all the gifts to our baby the most precious, why has it deteriorated into, first, affection, then, good-nature? For this reason and this reason only, that it has been *left alone*. We do not see what the gift means, we do not try to find out. Above all, we do not see that love in a baby's heart is just an instinct which is given to it, and given to us, only that it may be developed into the quality which brings into it all other virtues and which eventually, by its complete possession, puts us where love and obedience mean one and the same thing.

When our children disobey us, several feelings disturb us; first and foremost — I will say this much to our credit — we have an uneasy feeling about the child's own future; this is the germ of all that matters most in education stirring in our sluggish consciences, but our children's future is so far away, and we ourselves feel so vague a responsibility for it, we put it upon God if we are religious; upon all the hundred and one circum-

stances which will lie outside our own jurisdiction and which will influence our child; upon the child's own nature, conscience, wishes, and longings.

[And here I should like to be allowed to make a slight digression; it does not belong to my present argument, but illustrates a weak spot in our philosophy. When we are dealing with this, that, or the other child, we think far too much of the individual child and far too little of childhood; when we consider ourselves in connection with that child, or even when we may get to the length of considering ourselves in connection with childhood, we think far too much of our individual self as parent or guardian, far too little of parentage and of guardianship. A good deal of this is, of course, due to our inherent and terribly impregnable egotism, but a good deal of it also is due to a wrong appreciation of the little word "my." Our children are children (in the sense that they are a part of the world which is in making) far, far before they are *our* children. They are indeed ours, in so far that they are given into our charge to help and to train; they are ours because we are theirs; but when we talk of and think of our children's future as vague because we ourselves can have so slight a hand

in the building of it, and *for that reason* shirk any of the duties which a clear appreciation of parentage or of guardianship lays upon us, we are a good deal like a bricklayer who, helping to lay the foundations of a cathedral, might think that any bricks, any mortar, any sort of work will do for him to put in, seeing that in other hands may lie the completion of the work.]

But after this there come other far less important and far less worthy feelings. I hope to speak at further length of some of these later on, in a few chapters on obedience and our own duties to children in connection with it.

I will only speak of them now in connection with Love. Our little children love us to start with, we have granted this; whatever we are like intrinsically, their first instinct is one of stretching out hands of weakness to grasp and depend on our strength; they trust us, they have confidence in us, and this feeling of theirs we call Love; we say the children love us because it is sweet to us, while they are little, to see this readiness in them to take us at so high a valuation. And then, later? Well — let us look a little more closely and carefully at this feeling of the child's. I should say that, rather than calling it love, trust or confidence would be the truer name. And trust and

confidence in what? Surely in *our* love. Our love which depends for its manifestation to them on the fact that we are strong and they are weak. *Through* our superior strength and our superior experience shines down upon the little child beneath us some part of that everlasting Virtue which is behind and around everything. Does it? This is what the child is instinctively looking for, while he is as instinctively holding out hands of physical weakness to grasp our physical strength. Does he find it? Does he ask for bread and find a stone?

What do our little children gain from us in their earliest years? That is the question we ought to ask ourselves and, in all humility, answer. For it is upon the answer that we can conscientiously give that the development of this instinctive quality in little children, which we call Love, depends. It is not Love, using the term in its deeper sense; it is rather a search for Love, but it has in it the germ of what may truly become Love.

When a little child stretches out his hands to us, what does he find? Something stronger than himself, something that, by virtue of its superior strength, will lift him and carry him — where? That is the question for us.

Are we to be content with limiting our intercourse with the children around us to such interchange as stops with *ourselves*, or are we going to lead them to look through and behind us to what they are really asking of us, the infinite Love which rules all things?

I want to be able to speak of this feeling which is in all little children in such a manner that we may come, in connection with it, to the point of discussing a quality which I prefer to call Reverence.

When we speak usually of Reverence, we think of it as an attribute of worship directed to some particular being or virtue which we enshrine as sacred; I want to speak of it as the quality which comes nearest to this instinctive first feeling of a little child. At first, so near are little children to the Kingdom of Heaven, the means in a baby-mind signify nothing compared with the end. Whatever form the superior strength and age may take, the baby pushes right through it, striving to reach the infinite thing which they ought to represent. A little baby-child will reach out trusting hands to the biggest ruffian on the earth, believing it will through him find what it is seeking. This instinctive feeling must be educated and trained, it must to some extent also

be thwarted and confined; but it need never be changed. The quality it must be developed into is Reverence. For a child to be trained into the possession of a reverential spirit is the safeguard, for him, against the development of the spirit of self-assertiveness which slays everything that is highest in us. Reverence not for this or that person, not for this or that virtue, but the possession of the spirit which always looks up, always trusts, and always hopes — the spirit which leads us eventually to esteem self only as in its relation to others, because in and through those around us we shall find the high road to the Power and Spirit of Love which is deserving of all reverence.

CHAPTER IV

I HAVE, in the last chapter, set Reverence against Self-assertiveness. And in thinking of our ideals for children this quality of Reverence is one which should stand very high. It is not a common attribute of the children of the present day, and I am very much afraid that we are in danger of its becoming less and less so. And yet, I think if we look closely at the quality which I have spoken of as its opposite, Self-assertiveness, we shall begin to see why our children are not as reverent as we would have them be; and we shall see, moreover, I think, whose fault this is.

To a little child the world is most naturally a world which is important only as it relates to himself, everything which in any degree affects him personally is "mine" to a baby; and as children grow older and mind comes into play, one may watch this quality of self-assertion develop. Every pleasure that comes is just a pleasure as and where it touches "me;" every

disappointment is to be regretted as and how it displeases "me."

Now this quality, as I hope we may see later, may exist side by side with a certain generosity, with a certain unselfishness, even with humility, and therefore it is a quality of which it is difficult to perceive the weak points. A completely generous or unselfish or humble child cannot be self-assertive; but the average nice little girl or boy is nearly always so. The world exists for nearly all children only as it touches themselves; it would be quite an impossibility for them to imagine the world without them in it. If a child leaves a town that he has lived in, the town ceases to exist, not only because the child has a short memory, that might make him forget, but because the town without the child means nothing to the child. It ceases to exist for him as soon as it ceases to affect him.

In a little child with undeveloped mind this is quite excusable, more, it is quite unavoidable; but it is illustrative of a quality that we do wrong to foster, a quality which prevents development and elevation. If a child be trained from its early childhood gradually to think of himself as one in a crowd, part — an infinitesimal part — of a whole, the quality of self-assertiveness gradually

retires, and love takes its place. The boy who goes to school and thinks that the masters are there to teach *him*, the books are there for *him* to learn out of, the other boys are there for *him* to play with or for *him* to be teased by, is the typical boy of the present day, the ordinary fairly generous, fairly unselfish, fairly humble boy we all know so well, who grows into the "fairly decent" lad and young man we all know so well too.

To this boy the good things of this life are things to *get*, not things to *share*. This must necessarily be so to any one whose own self is the most important self in the world, and to nine people out of ten one's own self is more important than any other self. To a child, the fact that *he* wants to do a thing is in itself a reason for doing it; by the time a child becomes a young man this idea ought to be bred out of him. Convention and convenience — the convenience of others — modifies this childish instinct to some extent; we learn that to want to do a thing is not always or altogether a reason for doing it; there are some things we cannot do under certain circumstances, however much we want to do so, or however natural and reasonable seems the desire. But the lesson of self-restraint in the matter of the gratification of our instinctive or natural

wishes ought not to be limited to the bounds set upon them by convention and convenience.

A child ought to learn while he is quite young that his wanting to do a thing is *not* a reason for his doing it. The thing desired affects himself, it becomes at once for that reason immense in his eyes, all else retires behind it; the thing desired magnified thus blots out all else, for the moment nothing else is visible; straight out the hand goes to grasp.

There is only one way of counteracting this childish egotism; we must teach a child that the question for him is not, Do I want this, that, or the other? but, Is this a right thing for me to have? This is a big step onward, and it means, first of all, to the child, Is this a thing which others older and wiser than myself wish me to have? Self sinks back; others come to the front. Later, the question further expands and develops into, Is it right for or useful to others that I should have or do this thing? By degrees the child learns that existence should mean existence for the good of those around him.

It is very easy to see that a child's self is naturally and instinctively assertive; it is easy to see that in a child's estimation self asserts itself to the exclusion of everything else, that,

to itself, a little child is the hub of the universe to which everything of interest is directed.

It is therefore easy to see that it is only definite and deliberate training from outside which can teach a child Reverence. To a little child, its own affairs are of prime importance; he must be taught that the affairs of other people are always to be considered before his. He must learn that his appetite is not to be appeased till those around him are helped; that his conversation is only to be allowed when his elders do not want to be talking; that his wants and desires are only to be considered when they fall in with the wants and desires of his parents or other guardians. This may on a first hearing sound a little dull for the child, but let us see how it works out. The child gets pleasant things to eat; he gets his wants attended to; he gets his little chatter listened to, — but he gets all these things by grace of other people, not by himself thrusting forward his desires, — and in addition to this he is learning self-restraint. He may not by this plan eat so much jam or talk quite so much or so loud, but that again is all to the good.

While a little child *is* a little child this lesson of self-restraint, a lesson which is eventually to become the acquisition of the quality of Rever-

ence, is far easier to teach than becomes the case later in life. A little child readily recognises, once it is put clearly before him, that the business of those older and bigger and stronger than himself is of more importance than his own little affairs. The weapons I have spoken of earlier, of superior age and superior strength, are in our hands; we can enforce our lesson while yet the child is too young to understand the beauty of what we are teaching; and again, we have the instinctive respect of the child, the respect for this superior age and strength, answering to our demands.

When a child has reached boyhood without learning this lesson, self has become so prominent that — the fascinating charms of little childhood being left behind — the boy becomes a nuisance to his grown-up neighbours, and in consequence gets crammed into a sort of spurious mould of discipline, or is sent away to school "to get the conceit taken out of him." Arrived at school, he finds a good many other boys of about his own age, each with his own little *ego* fully developed. Once at school he must conform to certain rules made by recognised authority for use under the eye of the masters, and made by unrecognised authority for use among the boys themselves. But these rules do not touch the main subject;

they none of them root in the Reverence which is the opposite of Self-assertiveness.

Reverence, like every other quality which we use in our endeavour after perfection, has, as we saw earlier, its centre in love, and love means the esteeming of *every one* as higher and of more importance than ourselves, not because they are wiser or better or cleverer than ourselves, but because they are not ourselves. Ourselves in relation to other people is the only contemplation of ourselves which we ought eventually to allow ourselves, and we can only arrive at this by regarding all others with Reverence. Granting that it is quite impossible to reverence this or that particular person just as they are, quite as impossible for our little children as it is for ourselves, still we can teach our children, just as we can train ourselves, to look through what is to what might be. A drunken man rolling in the street gains our reverence directly we think of what he has lost. To a child who has been trained to reverence what is high and noble and true, it will gradually come natural to see through what is to what might be. There is nothing that stands so much in the way of the perception of ideals as the assertion of self; it is an impossibility to see virtue as an abstract good to be struggled

for by all, while our eyes are blinded by the interposition of our own wants, our own feelings, our *own selves.*

When one thinks of the perfection of Reverence, it looks as though we all had a weary, weary road to travel, and so we have. It looks, moreover, let us confess it, as if the result of such travelling would mean a very dull sort of existence for ourselves. But we have only to look at little children to see the mistake we make in allowing such an idea. An unselfish child is a happy child. He is happy more than he is anything else. I do not say he is gay or that he is merry more than he is anything else, though he is gay and merry enough; but he has a strong leaven of real, downright, brilliant happiness, which influences his whole life and the lives of all other children, aye, and of all other grown-up people around him. Children are apt, just as we ourselves are apt, to weary themselves in trying to be happy; they feel instinctively, and we feel deliberately, that the search for happiness is *the* search above all others. Cannot we teach our children and learn for ourselves what a false notion this is? We are in a world where our happiness entirely depends on the action of those around us. If we, on our part, devoted the

energy we expend in searching for our own happiness in endeavouring to make happiness for others, if we could teach our children this lesson, can we not trust others to be as good as we are ourselves? I would say to every child: "Leave your own happiness alone, never think of it, and you will find it supplied to you in far greater measure than you now think possible." It is not only that a child finds its happiness in seeing to the welfare of others, though that this is so is endlessly true; but that we in receiving kindness from others, in receiving, that is, at the hand of another what we might otherwise have grasped for ourselves, do get a real happiness which is quite unknown in the pleasures which we compass by our own efforts.

I seem to be saying what is somewhat of a platitude, but I have known many and many a child whose life is spoilt by this craving for personal happiness, this anxiety to secure it. And, looked at closely, I do not think it is hard to see how this desire roots in what I have called self-assertiveness. *I* am happy, or *I* am not happy, is a child's instinctive cry. Let us answer bravely: Never mind whether you are happy or not, never *you* mind; leave that for other people to do. Our children's happiness is so dear to us that we

readily fall into the mistake of letting them think of it as important to themselves, and so they grow up to be men and women whose own happiness is their first consideration, and so they lose their chance of all the real, true happiness that is waiting for them at the hands of others, and that is theirs in the providing of happiness to those around them. Even more than teaching our children to give happiness, we need to teach them how to take happiness. Children are often naturally kind and gracious, and one of the things which as a rule we do not neglect to teach them, is to "look after their neighbours;" but we do neglect to teach them to leave their neighbours to look after them, we do neglect to teach them to think of themselves not at all, but to trust to those around them to be, at any rate, as unselfish as they are themselves. And so it is, as I have said earlier, that our children grow up fairly generous, fairly unselfish, "fairly decent," while all the while, self is rampantly assertive in them, ready to spoil every effort and to cloud every virtue.

CHAPTER V

IT will seem to some of my readers, I fancy, that I should have done better had I chosen the term egotism to express this quality of which I am now speaking, rather than have burdened myself and them with such a cumbersome word as self-assertiveness. But I have purposely avoided the use, in this connection, of the word egotism, because egotism is a word which is in such habitual use that it has lost a good deal of its special meaning. I want, by self-assertiveness, to express the assertion of self; it need be neither synonymous with conceit or selfishness, as we usually think of these qualities. And, used in the sense I mean, it is particularly applicable to little children. It is quite true to say that little children are naturally egotists, but they are so because of the instinctive assertiveness of self in undeveloped, uneducated human nature; a little child can scarcely be said to *be* an egotist, though it is true enough that he may very soon become one, if he has not been taught that his self must not assert itself.

Instead of taking, as the first lesson to teach children, the lesson of the putting aside of self, we take certain faults of character, — greediness, conceit, cruelty, and so forth, — and hammer away at them until we produce a fairly thoughtful, fairly humble, fairly kind boy or girl; but the assertiveness of self is still there, indeed our usual method of education fosters this quality; we have directed our energies to teaching our children that *they* are not to be selfish, conceited, or cruel, instead of trying to get them to see that selfishness, conceit, and cruelty could not exist if self were sunk to such purpose that others stood first, self second. So the very virtues that we have striven to inculcate lose half their value because the child has learnt that "*I* am to be unselfish, *I* am to be humble, *I* am to be kind," instead of having discovered the beauty of unselfishness, humility, and kindness. A child may thus be gifted to quite an appreciable extent with certain virtues, and may grow to be a man or woman with these virtues fairly apparent, without being in any real sense truly possessed by any virtue at all.

I have tried to show that — following my theory of avoiding evil by inculcating its opposite — self-assertiveness in children may be subjugated by the acquiring of the spirit of

Reverence. And I think, if we are to set this before us as an ideal in the education of our children, we have one great weakness in our method to take into account, we do not teach our children Gratitude.

To little children the person older than themselves comes before them as a person who gives; the question we have to decide is which is to be most important in the child's mind, *I who receive* or *He who gives*, if the former (and obviously, it is the instinctive tendency of a little child that this would be so), it very soon becomes I who *get*, while the He who *gives* is quite lost sight of. The first lesson a child must learn is gratitude; he must learn that everything he gets or does or is means an effort made, something suffered by another, and that that other is the one whom he has to consider; moreover he must learn that to that person he must feel gratitude and that, above all, he must accustom himself to showing gratitude. We are remarkably apt to let a child stop short at feeling, so blind we are that we do not realise that to feel should be only the preliminary to showing forth; if we allow ourselves to be contented with the fact that our children feel as they should, we shall find, too late, that the feeling is fast dying away; stopping short of

manifestation, it has been divested of a reason for existence. It is easy enough for a child to feel pleased when some one gives him what he wants, he does that of his own accord; it is our part to deepen that feeling, to make it bear fruit, and this is done by training the child to make the necessary effort to express its gratitude. A child who takes anything at another's hand and absently murmurs "thanks," — cannot even take the trouble to say "thank you," — is just the kind of child who has not had the education I speak of. Quite a little child can be taught to look up *into the person's eyes* and smile his thanks, and thereby learn to mean his gratitude. Our English characteristic of shyness is as good a foundation for building a virtue upon as any other instinct; left to itself, it degenerates most speedily into a most grievous disadvantage, — the disadvantage of disabling us from expressing ourselves to others. This instinct of shyness is strong in almost every English child; it is bred into him through generations of Englishmen who have held the theory that reticence *in itself* is a virtue; a very little reflection shows us that it is nothing of the kind, that its value lies only in the fact that the power of self-restraint is the best possession a man can have. To be able to be reticent is a very great

boon; to have to be reticent whether you like or no is no boon at all, it is a miserable disadvantage. Most English boys simply cannot express themselves, when expressing themselves would mean showing gratitude to another; the more they want to do so the less they can, the more they look on the ground and shuffle their feet. With the best of them, the feeling of gratitude, their own instinctive good quality, is so strong that somehow it forces its way out in spite of the shyness and reticence, and to a very limited extent they do let others know what they feel. With the generality of children, this is not the case, and they very soon come to not expressing gratitude, not because they cannot show forth their feeling, but because they have no feeling to show. To a very few, the worst, a benefit conferred, though it is taken and enjoyed, means no occasion for any feeling but a wrong one; they develop a sort of resentment against the very people who try to help them most, and with them nothing eventually avails but harshness and severity. The original feeling of thankfulness has withered, and the place is taken by a resentful, critical, domineering spirit.

This quality of gratitude — one about which I feel so strongly that I am sometimes afraid of

thrusting it *ad nauseam* upon my readers — is one which we misunderstand, I believe, because we fall into our usual method of looking at things in a one-sided manner. We are apt to think of gratitude, as though the person we are being grateful to is the only one to be considered. We say to ourselves, So-and-So can't be much of a person, if he is always wanting to be thanked, or — in the case of our dealings with children — The child will think me rather mean if I keep expecting him to be grateful. This is because we think of gratitude as something to be received, more than as something to be given. The reason we want children to show gratitude, is that they may become people possessed of grateful spirit. We arrive at this latter point through the individual lessons of showing gratitude. If we stop short at these lessons, if, that is, we are not using them as a means to a high end, the attainment of a grateful spirit, then we may indeed think that gratitude is not much of a virtue. We want our children to grow up to be men and women to whom the actions of those around them are symbols of the spirit that governs their lives. Take this as our ideal, and we see where gratitude comes in.

We know the style of child of whom we say,

That child has no reverence in him. This is the child who has not been taught to show gratitude, who has not been made to cultivate a thankful heart. The lesson of, Others first, self second, means to a little child nothing but the cultivation of a thankful spirit; later it means infinitely more, but this first and this *only*. The one lesson for a little child to learn, if he is eventually to get the better of the assertion of self, is to feel and express gratitude.

Little children come to us possessed of the spirit of reverence; naturally and instinctively they see the abstract through the concrete, they see the love in the heart and entirely disregard the particular body in which the love has its abode; they are full of confidence and trust. Side by side with this lies *self*, the importance, the overwhelming importance of self; little by little the child, left to himself, regards everything, the love of others above all, from this point of view — how does it affect *me?* Little by little the mischief is done, self comes forward, others sink back; and it is all our own doing, we have made no effort to train the spirit of reverence, we have allowed the spirit of self-assertion to develop. We have not encouraged the child to make the effort, the effort which is always

necessary if any advance in the upward path is to take place.

I have spoken at some length of the necessity of teaching children to show gratitude to ourselves. It is not an easy point to get clear unless we put ourselves out of court, and see the question only from the child's point of view; or rather, unless we keep ourselves in court only for the purpose of leading the children to look through us to something infinitely more worthy of gratitude. This must, of course, be our eventual goal, if we are to reach, for our children, true Reverence at last. And, to this end, we neglect one immense help that is given us when we neglect the cultivation in our children of a love for, an appreciation of beauty in all the various ways in which it is manifested to us.

I believe it to be infinitely true, that a child, or any one else, can never know true gratitude while they are ignorant of the beauties by which they are surrounded; while, that is, they are debarred from making the necessary effort to learn all the lessons that these are meant to teach us, all the paths they are intended to take us along.

It is not easy for us to make up our minds to teach our children to say and mean their thanks to ourselves; it is a harder task to make up our

mind to teach our children to *seek out*, even with care and trouble, the lessons that lie hid in all the beauty with which we are so richly dowered. For one thing, we have got ourselves into such a curious way of considering the whole question: partly, no doubt, to save ourselves trouble; partly, because we have slipped into a way of thinking of the appreciation of beauty as of a gift belonging to the few; because only a few can paint, or carve, or compose music and poetry, we are apt to relegate all appreciation of beauty to a select few, or, at any rate, to think that a person must be of a certain age before we can expect appreciation from him.

Nearly all of us have got into the way of thinking that little children are not capable of appreciating beautiful sights and sounds. I do not know why we have arrived at this decision, except from sheer carelessness and want of thought. If we see a little child at a concert, and notice that he is interested, we at once conclude that there is something peculiar in his circumstances, that he is the son of a musician, perhaps of one of the performers in the concert. If we see a child apparently enjoying a picture gallery or a room of sculpture, in the same way we should think he was probably of artistic parent-

age, and we should probably be right. It is true that the children of what we call artistic people are more likely themselves to have an appreciation of beauty than the children of people who have no such leanings. And no doubt this fact is to some degree owing to heredity. But much more largely is it owing to association, and to the fact that the children of artists are expected to appreciate what is beautiful.

I have given the above illustration, however, not to show that the children of artists are artistic, but to show that, as a general thing, we do not expect the normal child to be so. Artistic is a poor sort of word to express my meaning, when what I mean is an appreciation of beauty whether in "nature" or in "art." To a certain extent, a very limited one, we do bring up our children to notice the beauties of nature. It is very little trouble, any ordinary nursemaid will take it, to say, Hark to the pretty birdies! or, See the pretty flowers! — the nursemaid would say it with the same idea that she would say, See the pretty gee-gee! or, Hark to the puff-puff! with the idea, that is, of amusing the child in her charge, and giving it the little instruction which she is capable of providing. It is not much trouble to teach a child to see the beauty of a sunshiny day, or to

love the sound of the singing of birds or the rushing of water; but we do not go further, we do not teach him what these sounds and sights *mean*. We do not develop this first instinctive delight in nature's beauties; we do not go into detail.

I do not know whether my readers will believe me when I say that a little child as readily loves the beauty of music, painting, and sculpture, as he loves the beauties of the outside world. If we were to take a little child to a long classical concert, or to spend several hours in a picture gallery, he would be bored; so would he be if we sat him by the sea or under a tree for hours; some children would not, but they would be abnormal children who were going eventually to be on the one hand abnormally devoted to music or painting, or on the other hand abnormally devoted to the beauties of the open air world.

The average child loves everything that is beautiful by instinct; we make some little effort to encourage this love of nature, though, as I have said, even this encouragement is wickedly inadequate. We make none at all to encourage the love of the beauty that lies in music, in painting, in what we call Art.

And by this we lose a very great help in the education of our children; we shut up one of the

best roads that exists for leading our children to the finding, through the visible beauty around them, of the everlasting Beauty that lies behind it all. Every opportunity that we let pass us by of teaching our children to know and appreciate the beauties of all that lies in their reach, puts further and further out of their reach that knowledge to which all the rest is but a passage.

Boys are not expected to care for beauty; they are considered somewhat peculiar if they care about the beauties of nature, still more are they considered peculiar if they care about the beauties of music, of painting, of sculpture. This is not the case, nearly so much, with girls, though even with them we do not give them half the chance we might, and the reason we give them any chance at all is not a good one, seeing that we do not extend it to the boys. In any case the normal education of girls as regards beauty cannot be worth very much, seeing that we have not any more worshippers of beauty, worth the name, among women than among men. I suppose the reasons for which we give our girls a sort of education in beauty are so paltry that the result of such education stands them in no stead.

A love for beauty, be it in sound, in colour, in form, in feeling, must — like every other lesson —

be begun early and be learnt by degrees. The average boy of twelve years old is a thorough-going "Philistine," and we rather pride ourselves on the fact. But when we begin to realise what "Philistinism" really means, we may see that we have not much to be proud of. In allowing such a system of education for our children, a system which shuts out from them all power of true appreciation of beauty, we cast a slur upon its various expressions which has most miserable results.

To the children themselves, we are doing an inestimable wrong. I have said that if a child is to become humble in the right meaning of the term, he must learn first of all to be grateful. A child *cannot* properly be grateful while he is ignorant of the beauty in the world around him. And we fail egregiously in the help we offer our children, when we do not make it an integral part of our system of education to lead the children from their earliest childhood to appreciate the beauties of the world around them.

Gratitude to ourselves we must teach them, as I have tried to show; but this is a lesson for very early years, a lesson of which the need soon ceases, a very primitive stepping-stone, though none the less a most necessary one and one far

too often ignored. The spirit in a child which "takes for granted" is the spirit we want to get rid of, and the only way of doing this is so to train a child that he always sees the giver standing behind the gift, so to train him that eventually all gifts centre for him in the Power which gives all. It is thus that the spirit of Reverence finds true expression, it is thus that through the lesson of Gratitude to those around us we have come at last to the everlasting Love, some part of which is discernible in every heart, if only we have been trained to look for it, and finding it, to give it Reverence.

CHAPTER VI

BEFORE going further, and with the idea of, so to say, clearing the ground before speaking of Obedience, I should like to look into the claims which we make upon children and upon which we base our right to be obeyed by them.

I think that the claim which needs the most careful examination is one which we rest upon the idea that children ought to obey us on the ground of their being younger than ourselves.

We think, and think rightly, and have no hesitation in saying that children ought to respect their elders. But I think that Respect is a word which we take upon our lips too easily when we apply it to children's relations with ourselves. As grown-up people, we are apt to ask this respect from those who are younger without sufficient consideration of our own share of responsibility.

What respect do we ourselves show to our profession as educators of the young? We find ourselves in this position; we find ourselves, that is, willy-nilly, members of this profession of educa-

tors: it is thrust upon us by the mere fact of the presence of children. It is a position from which it is hopeless to escape; as long as there are children in the world, so long are those who are older forced into the position of teachers, of educators: whether we are teachers of good or of evil is not the present question; something we must teach.

What respect do we ourselves show to this profession? Of course we know that abstract authority, though intrinsically unalterable, may have a slur cast upon it through its individual administrators; we say: So-and-so brings disrespect upon his profession, implying that in belonging to this or that profession we owe it such behaviour on our own individual part as shall conduce to upholding its ideal standard. Surely the respect we owe to our profession as educators of the young is to see that it is not affected through ourselves, as its administrators, being unworthy of respect. It is not because we are older and they younger that we have any reason to ask the respect of children, but that, *being older*, we ought so to act as to ensure respect.

There is no intrinsic or eventual difference between respect and reverence. One may, I think, however, speak of respect as a stepping-

stone to reverence. A child who does not know how to respect is no better than a monkey, and it is our clear duty to children to inculcate respect, and (as in the case of gratitude) we must begin with ourselves, but shall we find it possible to do this with any chance of permanent success unless we put before the child an ideal worthy of respect?

We are all born more or less with a longing to worship, and it is a duty which we owe to our profession as educators to see that this quality in the children gets into the right channel to *start with.* A child is much more likely instinctively to admire — and eventually to respect — a fox-hunting father than a district-visiting mother. Like every other quality in human nature, respect and reverence begin in a merely instinctive desire, which if left to itself is bound to go to waste, and there is all the difference between a child's instinctive desire to worship something and a man's quality of trained respect and reverence, that there is between a savage writhing in self-inflicted agony before his fetish and, say, Florence Nightingale. Both the savage and Florence Nightingale respect, reverence, worship, both are ready to immolate self upon the altar which represents these emotions.

It is instinctive to children to respect, but it is

not instinctive to them to choose the right object on which to expend this desire. I will not say that a child would not *choose* the right object if choice were given it, this would depend (like everything else in a child) on its inherent qualities, and it is beside the present question. This is the question for *ourselves*. Do we put before the children in our charge such an ideal that their education includes a gradual training of their instinctive desire to worship something into a clear knowledge of what is worthy of worship?

If we try to force children into showing us respect, while we have taken no special pains to render ourselves worthy of respect, one of two things must happen, either we shall not win the child's respect at all, or it will be learning to worship false idols, and it is not hard to see that, for the child's own sake and for the sake of its future, the former result would be by far the most desirable.

It seems almost too obvious a platitude to say that only by making ourselves worthy of the respect of all can we hope to earn for ourselves the true respect of even the youngest child, and yet it appears to be a necessary ingredient of my argument, for we are so incurably apt to assume

that age, as such, demands respect, just as we are apt to assume that age, as such, demands obedience. Age *ought* to *command* respect, but to say that because it ought, it does, is to say what is very far from the truth, and to blame children when they fail to respect their elders is often very far from just. A child fails in showing respect to his elders for one of two reasons, either because these particular elders are not worth respecting, or because his education has been deficient at the point where appreciation of what is truly respect-worthy comes in.

If we grant that every normal human being has born in him a desire to worship something higher or, at any rate, stronger than himself, it is not difficult to see where our duty, as far as it regards children, lies. It is our duty, surely, to give them something worthy of their worship. We, as grown-up people, come between children and whatever there is of great and of noble, we are the exponents of goodness to the children around us. Everything that touches the higher part of a child, any part of a child which is higher than the animal, touches him *through us*. It is as we appear to him, that goodness or badness, nobility or treachery, truth or falsehood, are represented in his mind. A child comes to

us ready and willing to worship anything that appeals to him as stronger or higher than himself, and along with this fact must be remembered a more important one, namely, that what appeals in this way to a child's mind is bound to be a false ideal if his mind is allowed to choose undirected. This instinctive desire for worship lives side by side with other instincts, and pre-eminent among these is the fighting instinct, and if a child is left to his own instincts, he will be almost invariably found admiring "brute force." The advantages of brute force are very obvious to the undeveloped mind, whether this mind be in a child or a grown-up person, its attributes are attractive, its dress, so to speak, is a showy one. Again, it is a quality very easily come by, any one can become physically strong, without doing anything unpleasant, so long as he is not hampered by some inherent bodily weakness; physical strength is a quality that appeals to every one, to those who do not possess it more than to any one else, and we find children admiring it and eventually worshipping it as they admire and worship no other quality, if they are children the higher part of whose minds has been neglected.

If I may be forgiven another platitude for the

sake of my argument, I will say that true goodness is always quiet; the *result* of the workings of true goodness may indeed be very far from silent, but the stream itself is never noisy, and it flows mostly under the ground; and here again it is not hard to see why a child's mind needs the most careful education, if it is to see the beauty of real goodness so clearly that it can develop the instinctive desire to worship something into the trained habit of worshipping the highest.

The desire for an object to worship is an instinct far higher than any other instinct we are born with, being — as it is — the one instinct which we do not share with the animal creation, and for that reason it is not a difficult feeling to raise. In itself it is a longing for the highest, and when we — in our position as educators — thwart this desire, we are thwarting and stunting the highest quality the children possess, we are deliberately taking them step by step down to lower ground than that on which we find them.

Children learn to admire physical strength without any trouble on our part; they learn to invest it with a value with which the uneducated mind must always regard it. I need hardly say that, in itself, physical strength is a great and good possession; the point I want to insist upon

is that, instead of regarding it as any other natural gift, we are apt — if our education has been neglected — to invest it with a factitious value, regarding it, not as a means to an end, a weapon given us for a certain purpose, but as an end in itself, a quality to be admired for itself. Physical strength is not a virtue; but appealing as it does to children through their fighting-instinct, it is very apt to be regarded by them as something far more worthy of veneration than virtue itself. Real virtue is generally presented — simply from lack of trouble on our part — in such a dowdy form that, from simple inability to look below the surface, children are often denied the opportunity of gaining the qualities of respect and reverence without which no mind is worth calling a mind at all.

It is here, at the root of the matter, that our mistake has arisen. Far back in our minds we have allowed ourselves to keep a quite false idea of children's duty to their elders, an idea fostered by the fact that we can compel, and that children have born in them an instinctive reverence for strength. Not choosing to acknowledge this, we build our claim for respect from children upon the very shaky foundation formed by the adage that youth ought to respect age.

The Jews of old were bidden to honour their parents, and no doubt we are bidden also to do the like; but this command (which we accept without question when we apply it to our children and which we puzzle over when we apply it to our parents) is — like every other command given by a wisdom which is universal — a command for no individual case, but a command for all. Honour your father and mother is a rule quite as much for the parent as for the child; it is a rule which is of a quality to form the spirit of universal parentage and universal childhood. Can wisdom say Honour your parent, to the child without saying at the same time, Make yourself honourable, to the parent? If we, as the elder, are of such quality that no child in its senses can honour us, whose fault is it if the child disobeys the command, Honour thy father and mother? If we read the command thus, Honour parentage, then I think we come close to the spirit in which such commands are given, and in which they are meant to be interpreted.

CHAPTER VII

IN our dealings with children, we have placed in our hands two weapons which we are inclined to use too unsparingly. The first, I have spoken of — superior physical strength. The second is tradition. It is according to tradition that children should respect their elders, it is especially according to tradition that they should respect their parents. And no doubt to a certain extent tradition is right. It always is — to a certain extent. And, moreover, I do not think there can be a shadow of doubt that it is natural to children to respect their elders, and also that children can stand a good deal of disillusioning in this matter before they begin to lose this natural respect. It is not very difficult to see why it is natural for children to respect their parents, we do not need to ascribe any very high motive in accounting for it. It comes natural to all of us to believe in what belongs to us. A family is called "unnatural" which does not believe in and hope for its own members. The tie which kin-

ship of blood brings is the strongest tie in the world of nature of all the ties that bind one human being to another. It is a natural instinct and, as such, inherent in the youngest child. But we ought to be prepared to acknowledge that it is *only* an instinct, and, though its strength as such is phenomenal, yet that reason and experience have nothing to do with it.

Reason and experience, if rightly developed and guided, teach children to honour what is honourable, to respect what is respectable, and, though the filial and fraternal instinct dies very hard, very generally never dies at all, yet often in later life — even very slightly later — we find this instinct becoming only a longing which does not find satisfaction, a blind hope which strives to create what has never existed.

The law which governs human nature has implanted in that nature certain strong instincts without which human nature would cease to be. This tie of kinship is one, and, as I have said, it is a weapon which we use most recklessly and imprudently. These fundamental instincts are given us as something upon which our higher natures (that part of us which is higher than mortal nature) can build. Reason and experience should develop these instincts, *use* them in such

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fashion that, by degrees, they become fused into our higher nature.

A little child instinctively respects his parents, because they are his parents; he should eventually respect them because they are worthy of respect, if he does not, he will most certainly end in not respecting them at all; that is, if his education includes the development in any true sense of his reason. And who can blame him?

The lower we go in human civilisation the stronger we find these instincts, and the longer we find their survival in the life of individual men and women. Where the reason is not developed the instincts remain unchanged, and a savage reverences his father and mother from the mere fact of their being his parents long after he has reached an age where *we* might have learnt to appreciate only their faults and peculiarities.

But no one can say that a highly-civilised man respects his father — when that father is worthy of respect — less than a savage does. On the contrary a child, and eventually a man, in learning to esteem what is estimable in all men, learns to build upon his filial instinct such an esteem for the father who is estimable as would be impossible to an undeveloped or uneducated character.

If we consider that we have any authority over children, as such, we must analyse our claims to this authority very carefully, and be very sure that we can justify them to the children themselves. If we cannot do the latter, we shall very soon cease to be the judges and become the judged. And how could we expect, how indeed could we wish for it to be otherwise?

Do we wish our children to grow to be men who respect and honour what is respect-worthy and honourable? If we do, we must be content to take the other side too, and wish them to learn to despise and abhor what is disreputable and dishonourable; if they are to learn to take this view of life in general must we not be content for them to take it of ourselves in particular?

There are a great many of us who will not give children a chance of learning to know us at our true worth, because we have blinded their eyes by insisting on the axiom — one which takes its root only in instinct and tradition — that they are to respect us *because* we are older than they. We have dinned this axiom into their ears with such persistence that we do not perceive that we are building a house upon sand while we are ignoring the good solid foundation of which we might have made use.

We will not let children learn to respect us for what is really worth the respect of their reason, we have been so insistent in asking their respect for what must become, to their developed power of appreciation, a shadow.

This traditional and instinctive respect must be stronger in the case of a child with his parents and relations, than in the mere relation of the younger to the elder, and I believe that this last is not so difficult to appreciate rightly as is the relation of kinship of blood. There must be a good deal of "give and take" in blood-relationship; it is a complicated business one way and another. The tenderness of a mother *as* a mother, family pride—these and other considerations enter into the family question, and complicate the parental authority. But when we come to authority as centring in an elder, as such, the question resolves itself more simply. Then we come face to face with the idea, pure and simple, that youth must submit to age. There must be something in the rule of primogeniture, but it is hard to see that there is anything but convenience. It is one of those rules which have a very deep foundation, and it seems a very necessary one to obey. But I do not see that it has anything to do with respect, except the sort of respect we

render to those who are better off in the goods of this world than ourselves.

This kind of superiority demands, no doubt rightly, a kind of respect, — the respect one renders to any one who is more highly gifted in any way than ourselves, whether in birth, looks, wealth, or any other temporal advantage. Of course (to digress a little from my present point) this respect only deserves the name when it is respect for what these advantages may mean and of the use to which they may be put by their possessor; respect, that is, for the additional power which they give their possessor of becoming worthy of respect. And when we have said this, it seems that we have said all there is to be said of the respect due to primogeniture; but there is still this to be considered, that our habit of respecting the advantages which accrue to the elder by virtue of his seniority have led to a factitious value for age as such; this, I think, accounts to a large extent for the traditional respect of youth for age, and we find it quite as strongly implanted in the nursery, where the modest year may be the intervening space between the persons concerned, as we find it in the elder who says to the child: "I am older than you and know better." Only in the latter case, what the elder is meaning to con-

vey is that he is older in experience than the child he is addressing, while in the nursery, no doubt, the idea is only a reflection of this meaning, and is complicated by the primogeniture rule.

This notion that children ought to obey us because we are older than they and, from being so, wiser on account of our greater experience is a notion that may well bear analysis.

Considering that no two persons' circumstances are quite alike, we may say to start with that no one person's experience of life is, on the face of it, certain to be of use to any other person. Where there are points of similarity in the circumstances of one and another, the experience of one should certainly be of use to the other. And it is from the truth of this that we are able to make rules and, in more or less degree, a science. Just as a carpenter can teach a carpenter's apprentice, so can the elder daughter *as such* teach the younger daughter *as such*.

But if we say that because we have gone a certain distance on *our* life's journey we can therefore guide others on *their* life's journey, except at such points where their circumstances are to be similar to our own, we must be making a mistake.

People do not know life because they themselves have lived; they may know the tiny part

of it which has come directly under their own ken; they may know the quality of the ground on which their own foot has trodden, and to that extent we may warn those whose footsteps are going to coincide with ours; we may even insist, while it is still in our power to do so, that the little foot is planted just there where the solid ground is, and not in the spot where we saw, as we passed, the mud or thorns.

But what a limited distance this takes us, and what a very much wider interpretation we put upon the phrase that "we know better," when we are dealing with children!

We say glibly to a child when he questions an order: "Because I tell you to do so, and I am older than you," having taken no pains to show the child on what we rest our claim to superiority. We may be perfectly right, we may — in the particular instance — know better than the child because we are older; but we ought to be very sure that this is so before we insist upon it as a reason for our demand on the child's subservience. And given the ordinary case of man and child, or of woman and child, is not his or her experience in all probability a very weak thing to depend upon in their guidance of the child? And is not this specially true of parents? If absolute similar-

ity of circumstances is the only ground on which we can insist upon obedience to ourselves "because we are older and know better," our area of compulsion is very limited.

To those of us who love children truly, there is sadness in this reflection, — the reflection that in nine cases out of ten, our own experience profiteth nothing to those who look to us for guidance. But when we have once grasped the truth of this, and when we go on from this to grasp the still greater truth that the infinite is beyond us all, grown-up people and children alike, and that somewhere in that infinite lies the highest possibility for every child who comes within our range, then we can see that we have something latent in every child to which to appeal which should help far more in its guidance than anything in *ourselves*, any deductions we may have drawn from our own little share of experience of the unfathomable mystery called life.

In this region, experience does help us; the experience of all those who have ever lived; the experience which tells us that within the reach of every one lie possibilities which only become possibilities by our own faith in their existence.

In what I have said above I have carefully kept out the word "affection," because the in-

stinct of filial and fraternal affection is a very different quality to that of filial and fraternal respect. Affection in this connection implies a feeling towards a person or persons; respect implies a feeling towards an idea or ideal. If the ideal is missing from the education of a child, respect will wither. That is to say, if the natural instinct of a child to worship something is not trained into respect for high ideals, it will remain an instinct only, and, as such, will be bound to deteriorate into admiration of what is despicable. A neglected child may easily respect a bad father for his sheer superiority of physical force; but, apart from the fact of its temporary quality, this kind of respect can scarcely be called respect at all; it is, at any rate, not the stepping-stone to Reverence.

Instinctive affection for members of one's own blood is in no way to be compared with what I have called an instinctive desire to worship, an instinctive respect for what is higher and stronger than oneself. One knows that affection may live after respect has died; one knows how devotedly a child may tend a parent for whom he can keep no single grain of respect. And one knows, moreover, that say, do, or think as we may, the affection we feel for our blood-relations

is a different quality to any personal affection we may feel for others. In any crisis where personal feeling comes in, for a father, a mother, a brother or sister, the ties pull hard at once. This is not respect, it is not even love, it is simply instinctive affection. It is doubtless given for the purpose of the preservation of the species.

That it is capable of bearing true respect with it, that it is capable of becoming love is beyond doubt; but in itself we ought not, I think, to confound it with the instinct of respect of which I have written above.

Speaking here of the rendering of respect from children to those older than themselves, I have kept my remarks in rather narrow limits, speaking principally of children's duty in this matter to those directly set over them. But it bears looking into from a wider point of view. It is a moot point among many of us who study the question of the moral education of the young, how far we ought to allow any criticism of their elders to be expressed by children. For my own part (I only offer this as an opinion), I am inclined to think we are all far more nervous on this point than we need be; and I think, moreover, that if we look closely at the nature of this

nervousness, we shall find that it has its root in an alarm less children should not put a sufficiently high value upon us, lest a true knowledge of us by them should hinder us in our work of bending them to our wishes.

It is easy to say that for a child to criticise an elder is a piece of impertinence, and shows a conceited spirit; but children are always criticising their elders, they are always measuring them by the capacity of their own little pint-pots. Each other they take as they come, they very rarely criticise each other; but those older than themselves they are constantly taking the measure of.

There is a reason for this, and the reason is, I think, that children approach their elders as people who expect obedience from them, or rather, to keep to the lines of this chapter, who claim respect from them, and they immediately begin to question this claim, and — unless we are careful — to resent it. This is the ground of their criticism.

Having granted then, and it is useless to shut our eyes to the fact, that children are continually (and I really think with very good reason) criticising their elders, is it not better that we should acknowledge it, and see to it that it is a sensible

and trained criticism, rather than a silly, undeveloped, babyish one? Is it not better that a child should say to ourselves, What a silly man Mr. So-and-so is, and meet from us a demand for the reason of this opinion, and a careful initiation into the regions of charity and true criticism, than that children should whisper together behind our backs or in another room their silly, ignorant expressions of opinion. If Mr. So-and-so is silly, we do not make him any wiser either in reality, or in the children's eyes, by pretending that he is wise. But we may make the children a great deal wiser by teaching them what true and loving criticism really means. Not only this, if we approach the subject with children in this manner, in such wise, that is, that they learn to know that we do not deny to them some right to judge, while leading them towards a power of wise and true judgment, we shall very soon find them ready to trust us when we assure them that they must not try to measure grown-up people by their own immature standard.

More than this, and higher still, we shall find the children far readier to admire what is really noble, far more ready to see below mere superficialities of manner or character, than they would

be if left to themselves to form their own silly little judgments. Left to themselves, children find in these superficialities endless food for foolish criticism which may well be called impertinence.

I think it is a great mistake to say: Children will criticise their elders; they had much better do it openly than only among themselves, — and there leave it. This makes a very incomplete system unless we take the trouble to guide their criticism aright; by this means we shall not only put children on the tack of using judgment in their criticism, but we shall lessen the quantity of criticism altogether. It is far easier to be foolish than wise. It is much easier to talk nonsense than sense, and a child's flow of talk becomes astonishingly lessened as he begins to get a true sense of the value of conversation.

I have alluded here only to the criticism of children on the average grown-up person. Of course the case of people with downright bad principles is somewhat different; there, I think, we must allow downright censure. But only at first; as a child learns the true meaning of respect and, later, the true beauty of Reverence, he will learn also, as I said earlier, to look through what is to what might be, and there criticism

sinks out of sight, and love and pity and a longing to help alone remain.

I have said a good deal, and implied a good deal more, to the effect that we as grown-up people (as people, that is, placed, by the mere fact of our having left early youth behind us, in the position of educators) stand to children in the position of exponents to them of what is higher than themselves.

If we acknowledge this, we must see at once, I think, how carefully we ought to look into the question — one which we are far too apt to shirk — to what extent children ought to be in the company of ourselves. We want, first, to face clearly the fact that, at least while they are quite little, they are with some kind of grown-up people if they are not with ourselves. I should like to draw attention first to the fact that we are not nearly careful enough what sort of people our children spend their time with when they are young: we divide servants into various classes,— cooks, housemaids, nurses, and so on, and we say we have a good "nurse," without troubling overmuch whether we have a good woman as a companion for our children. On the whole we prefer a steady-going rather stolid sort of person who is free from a certain sort of what is called "common-

ness," who pronounces pretty well, and who sleeps pretty soundly, so that she does not get ill from sleeping with restless children. With this kind of person, our children, during the early years of their lives, years when they are acquiring notions and habits which will not be eradicated in after years without much pain to themselves and others, spend, say, twenty-two hours out of the twenty-four.

I am no advocate for parents always having their children in evidence, especially those who possess a large circle of miscellaneous acquaintance, nor do I think it suitable that children should hear all that their elders have to say; but I do say, Have the children with you as much as possible, and do take some pains as to the character of the woman you engage as nurse.

In speaking of a servant we get to think of the word "character" in a technical way; we allude to a testimonial of her capacity as this, that, or the other form of servant. If we once realised the importance of the development of children from their earliest years, we could not fail to make a great change in our standard as to what is necessary in a nurse.

We speak of our little children as being "in the nursery;" is not this typical of our own attitude towards them? Their natural place is in the

nursery. I know that many of my readers will begin to picture what would be the result if my suggestions were carried out and our small children's place was rather with ourselves than with the nurse. The drawing-room, our own sitting-rooms would be a pandemonium; we should "never have a moment's peace." An hour or so one can bear, for an hour or so one can get down on all fours, and consent to be rumpled and dragged at and deafened, but imagine this going on all day. Why does not it occur to us that our children ought to value our companionship for some rather better reason than the fact that we lend ourselves to their amusement? Most little children look upon their parents and guardians as people who are either giving them lessons or playing with them, and they would be nothing but bored if they were expected to amuse themselves quietly and modestly, while their elders are entertaining themselves in their own way. When the children are sent away into the nursery, we wash our hands of them, and their interests fall into other hands; but what assurance have we that these hands are more suitable to educate our children than our own?

As I said before, I do not think children ought always to be with us, or rather I do not think we

ought always to be with children; but we ought to be very sure that the alternative is a good one from the children's point of view, not only a convenient one from ours.

Nursery discipline needs a great deal of looking into. Children are very patient, and baby-children are very loyal. When we think how difficult we find it to "put up" with little children for long at a time, we *must* recognise that it cannot be any easier for the nurses. Each nurse develops a sort of discipline of her own; many and many a one infuses little acts of cruelty into her idea of keeping children in order; many others attain their object by a system of spoiling and indulgence which answers moderately well while the children are quite little. Let us make up our minds to face this question.

But this is all somewhat by the way; I have touched upon the nursery aspect of childhood in passing to what I want really to consider as to the question of elder children, children from, say, eight to fourteen, and their contact with their elders. In many large families, in many preparatory schools, the authorities provide a large room, either away from the house or in a remote part of it, where the children are constantly shut up in a heap together.

Children should never be alone together unless they have something definite to do, some game to play which has regular rules, or some amusement on definite lines; even then they should never be alone together for long, and in any case their play-room should always be within sound of their elders.

The people who think that children are bored by their elders are people who have a wrong idea of the true education of children; children who are bored by the presence of their elders are children who have not been blessed with a wise guardianship. Children need guiding in their play nearly as much as they do in every other detail of their life. Not quite as much because "play" is a transient feature, and its expressions belong to children as apart from their elders; but these transient features of childhood should be most valuable auxiliaries in our system of education. One acknowledges this to a great extent with cricket, football, and such like games, and it is every bit as true of every game that children play. Left to themselves, children no more play rightly than they work rightly or live rightly; playing very soon degenerates into senseless "bally-ragging," which, in its turn, very soon leads to worse. Children do not *naturally*

play their games by rule, any more than they naturally live their lives by rule; but that is not to say that they do not enjoy their games ten times more, just as they enjoy their lives ten times more, when they have been trained to "play the game" properly, and subject to rule and discipline.

I have nothing to say against noise, any more than I have anything to say against kicking or hitting. But the noise must be noise with a purpose, noise with a reason, if it is not to be a source of deterioration to a child's character. A child should strike his hardest — with his bat, his hockey stick, his racquet, even, on necessary occasions, with his fists; he should kick his hardest — with a football; but unless the element of restraint, of reserve, of *discipline* is there, the striking, hitting, throwing, kicking, soon become wild foolishness. And we may see that this is true of children's noise pure and simple. Let it be loud, even loud enough to cause us sedater persons a good deal of inconvenience, but let it mean something, let it be caused by something which in itself is a healthy and sensible recreation to the child's mind and body, indulged in at right and reasonable times and on right and suitable occasions.

We say, children are naturally noisy, and we

leave them to make all sorts of horrible and senseless noises which, if looked into, we should find were signs of nothing but vulgar emptiness; forgetting that children are never naturally anything but that which is given to be trained by us into something spiritually significant.

Children are noisy because they are alive, the more alive they are the more noisy they want to be, and in this lies the necessity for us to see that, while they lose nothing of their vitality, they are learning to be noisy without being senseless. A boy may hit as hard as he likes when his bat is straight and he knows the right direction in which to send the ball; he may kick as hard as he likes when he has learnt the right elevation for the ball and is in his right place in the field; and a child may shout as loud as he likes when such shouting has a meaning behind it.

Thus much for play, but the subject widens still further. We have allowed the growth of a barrier between our world and the child-world which we are somewhat chary of stepping over, for fear the children should accuse us of prying. This is owing, I think, to two reasons. Partly, I think, we feel in children that attitude of criticism of which I have spoken in another chapter, and are shy of encountering it (this is the same

sort of reason which makes it so hard for some of us to get on easy terms with people of a lower class than ourselves), partly we will not give children their rightful meed of respect. Children don't want us while we meet them only to praise or blame. They want to be helped. They do not know this; they could not express it in words; they would be horrid little prigs if they could: but all the same it is the deepest need of their natures; they want to be led, they want to be guided, they look to us to lead and guide them in every single detail of their life. This should be our main thought as regards children: that they are crying out for help; we should give it continuously; praise and blame should be rare, isolated circumstances; help should never cease.

If our help be real, can we imagine that children can be bored by our presence? I would lay down as an unalterable rule that children should never be without grown-up people; not necessarily with them in bodily presence, but with them so completely that, in any trouble, any difficulty, they have at hand something to turn to. If we love children in the sense that, above all, we want them to grow into worthy men and women; if, backed by this love, we give ourselves to their education humbly and

earnestly, the children who are under our charge will feel us with them wherever we or they may be. But we must remember that they *are* children, beings apt to forget, immature beings, needing constant showing and constant reminding. The education of children is a work which will bear no slacking; but it is a work which only becomes over-arduous and disheartening for those who have to bear burdens, the weight of which is due to the carelessness and shiftiness of those who will not face their own responsibilities. Children bear with them a charm, a never-ending delightsomeness, a beauty born of childhood itself which is more than a sufficient recompense to us for anything we may give to them; but we must do our own work, we must be honest with ourselves, and where we delegate for them, we must be quite sure that we are acting in the interests of the children themselves, looking at those interests from the highest possible standpoint.

CHAPTER VIII

I BELIEVE that all of us who have charge of children think, at the bottom of our hearts, that our one great duty with regard to these children is to make them obey us. True, some of us, a good many of us, succeed in carrying out this duty but indifferently. "Disobedient little children" are more common than "obedient little children." And when we fail, we think that we do so because of the inherent disobedience of children in general. If we are humble, we think that we ourselves do not possess that peculiar faculty necessary for the subjugation of the disobedience-fiend which resides in all children; if we are conceited, we think that the particular children we have to do with are particularly disobedient. In the former case we lash ourselves unmercifully, in the latter we lash the children. I should very much like to approach this subject from the point of view that there is no such thing as obedience and disobedience to mere rule as such; that is to say, that there is no such thing as children being obedient to *ourselves*.

Every rule that one gives a child is an order which the child may or may not obey — granted: but it is because we are apt to take any rule we may give a child as though obedience to this rule were an end in itself, that we get the very limited and very false idea of that obedience which we so often fail to enforce. Does it matter in the very least whether a child obeys *us*, except in so far as *we* stand for the time (that is, while the child is quite young, not yet arrived — as we say — at years of discretion) between the child and a rule which is everlasting, dealing out to its undeveloped mind this universal rule in fragments fit for its immature digestion? If this be so, if obedience to the individual rule means nothing in comparison to obedience to the universal rule of which we are ourselves, for the time, the dispensers, then what ought we to blame when the child disobeys? Ourselves, surely: and here the humble dispensers are right. But it is right to be humble only so that, in our humility, we may learn where we are wrong and thus amend; and I think the guardian of childhood whose humility takes the direction I implied above, the direction which makes us feel, "It is my own fault that the child will not obey *me*," would be a better guardian if he could

bring himself to say, "It is my fault that I have not taught the child to look through me, to the rule I represent."

Every one of the rules which are made for childhood's guidance are *nothing in themselves*, and yet what a fuss we make about the children obeying us. We say a child is disobedient because he does not do what he is told ; why should he? Does it ever occur to us that the only reason why a child should obey *us*, is because we can make him suffer if he does not? But let us put the matter on a different ground, let us acknowledge that in giving a rule we are only lifting a child up high enough to take a peep over a wall where all is light beyond, let us acknowledge that obedience to any rule is only a step towards obedience to all rule, and we can see more clearly where we ourselves "come in." We can see that obedience to ourselves means nothing valuable, except where the child recognises that in obeying us he is obeying a universal rule beyond and above us.

We are very fond of saying: "We must make children obey us," and we are quite justified in so saying if we realise, not who it is the child is obeying, but what it is he is obeying. When once we have realised this, the rules we make and

the obedience to them which we enforce will take their proper place in the discipline which we exert over the children in our care.

When we are talking and thinking of children, we speak and think of obedience as though it were a separate virtue of itself; we say, a child should be obedient, truthful, pure, courageous and so on; while the fact is that a child is only truthful, pure, courageous, and so forth in so far as he is obedient — not to *us*, not to this or that rule which we put out for him, but to the universal rule which stands behind it all.

We may, if we choose to be contented with such a limitation, say that a child is obedient because he does what we tell him, goes to bed directly he is told, rubs his boots on the mat, puts his things away after his games: but let us pause and think for one moment of what value is this obedience, this "doing as he is told," if it stops at obedience to ourselves? Why does a child do what we tell him? Because he knows we can compel him, or because he knows *why we give the order?* He must do it for one reason or the other. Even if the child renders what we are apt to call falsely "blind" obedience, as we all must sometimes, still the same rule obtains, still he is either doing what he is told because we can compel him, or

because he knows why we give the order, only, in this case it resolves itself into his knowing why we give all orders,— a step further which we cannot expect a child to gain at once.

We may say then, I think, that obedience, *in itself*, may be in children, no virtue at all; if a child obeys, he may very easily be doing so simply as the slave of a cruel master may obey. A child may be obeying his mother with no more virtue in himself for so doing than if he were a fag obeying a bully at school. And many, many mothers put themselves in this position to their children, and those, too, often enough, women who approach the whole question with humility.

The fact that we can make rules for children, and can enforce the keeping of them, to the extent of outward submission to ourselves, is a bewildering fact. There are the children, here are we, with complete power over them to break or bend. But let us think — this power lessens as they grow older, directly they are stronger than ourselves it ceases, what then is its worth, by itself? And yet how many of us are content to depend principally upon this power in our treatment of children. How many of us fail to extort obedience to ourselves only because we cannot find it in our hearts to push this power to its limit.

We find ourselves with this power from the sheer fact that we are full-grown, they are children; we are the strong, they the weak. And, quite instinctively, we depend upon this fact from the beginning. We do not see, we do not take the trouble to see, that this power is given us only as a means to an end, only as a means by which we may administer, *through* these rules which we can make and (by this power) enforce, some part of that eternal and universal Law which lies behind all rules and all laws.

A timid child is naturally an "obedient" child; just as a courageous child may be naturally a "disobedient" one. Obedience to ourselves is not a virtue in a child if the obedience ends with ourselves; it is a convenience to us, and, if properly used, a most useful weapon in our hand when we set out to fight evil in company with the child we are guiding; but that is all it is, and a child who is what is so often called an "obedient" child is just as likely to be obedient to the person who counsels wrongly as to the person who counsels rightly, if he has learnt to render obedience to the person instead of to the principle behind the person.

In making rules for children, then, ought we

not to be quite sure ourselves, first, why we make the rule, and be quite sure, secondly, that the child understands that the rule is only the means to an end? Ought we not to teach children that obedience to ourselves only means obedience to what we are trying to represent? Otherwise what reason has a child for believing us when we say he *ought* to do so and so? We know what reason he has for doing it, when we say he *must*, the reason that we can make him; but we cannot make him "ought," and this is all that really matters in the long run.

How far, then, ought we to exert this power which says to the child "you must"? To the furthest extent, if we are only using it for the development of the lesson "you ought." We give a child a rule; we say, "You must do so and so;" our next care should be to present to the child's mind our reasons, our excuse, for giving this rule, and these reasons root in universal Law. On the result of our own and of others' collective experience are founded these rules which we give, and they are finite; the carrying out of them, *as they stand*, is limited to our power as grown-up people over the weak children we are dealing with: on the child's mind, as it is one with universal and eternal Law, is founded the reason

why the child *ought* to obey the rule we put forward, and this is infinite and its power is unlimited and entirely outside the compulsion which we, as the strong over the weak, can exert.

I think it is not hard to see that our argument, so far, brings us to the point of being able to say that the genuine disciplinarian is one whom grown-up people would be inclined to obey as well as children. A disciple is one who follows; a disciplinarian should be one who leads, not one who compels — and the man who can lead children truly is the man who possesses those qualities of mind which mark him out as superior to the "common herd," and a superior mind will always find a following, will always find other minds able and anxious to be led. If we look closely at the few people who are genuine disciplinarians of children, people to whom children instinctively render respect, we shall find that they are generally people to whom their own friends also are inclined to submit. This ought not to be so generally the case as it is. We ought — as grown people — to be able, in our dealings with those younger than ourselves, to command respect by virtue of our superior age, even though we are not of those whose minds are superior to the average. Superior age

ought always to mean superior experience, and it is only on experience, our own and that of others, that rules for those younger than ourselves can with any justice be founded and enforced. If we are always, in giving a rule, to look ourselves and lead the children to look as well, through the individual rule to the Universal Law, we can only do so successfully by being able to say, "Such and such things I have proved by experience," or, "Such and such things have been proved by the experience of others."

We do not need to be very clever to know that an untidy child grows to be a selfish man, that a greedy child grows to be undisciplined and sensual, that a child who is careless of the feelings of insects and animals will grow up brutal and inhuman, and so forth; but in giving the early rule which tends to tidiness, "Put your things away," to temperance, "Do not eat any more jam," to kindness, "Leave off teasing the dog," we must, if we are to be worth our salt as disciplinarians, take care that in giving these rules we are referring them in our minds back and on to the eventual development in the child of an appreciation of all Law. It is care we need, not especial cleverness.

And with it all we need to keep that humility

of which I have spoken, not only that humility which says, "It is my fault that I cannot manage that child," but the humility in ourselves which respects the mind of the child over whom we are set.

CHAPTER IX

I THINK it is because we instinctively feel that our power of compulsion over children ceases where the affairs of the body cease, that we are inclined to put our idea of obedience in children at the same limit. So many people have an odd kind of reluctance to grant to children the respect which is undoubtedly their due. They seem continually afraid of "letting themselves down" in the children's eyes. I am not quite sure whether one ought to call this fear conceit or humility, but in any case I am inclined to call it a great mistake.

The mind of a child deserves just as much respect as does the mind of a grown-up person; in advising a line of action to the latter we give our reasons for such advice; we should do the same in the former also. That, in the case of a child, we can compel action has nothing to do with the point at issue; the inferiority of the child ceases at the affairs of the body; for what we appeal to in the mind of the child is not what it is (a child's mind *is* nothing), but what it is

going to be, and it is for this reason that a child's mind is as much outside our power of compulsion as is the mind of a full-grown person, and is moreover completely outside the region of "rule-making."

In the affairs of the body there is such a thing as being "grown up;" in the affairs of the mind, there is no such thing; where we give our reason, our excuses, to a child for insisting on such and such a line of action, we are appealing, in the child, to its individuality, and we are attempting to strike an advance chord in that individuality. We must do this: we must, in reasoning with a child, talk not to what it is, but what it is going to be. And in doing this, we are appealing to a part of its nature quite outside our own jurisdiction; for we are not so much appealing even to what the child is going to be, as to what it ought to be, to what every one has it in their power to become.

In giving a rule, we enforce concurrence, because our own and others' experience have taught us that certain childish faults develop into certain characteristics, or rather, to put it in another—and a truer — way, that all the broad, general mistakes which we make in our journey through life originated in some unchecked fault in our

childish characters. So that in making rules we have a certain amount of firm ground to take our stand upon, the ground of collective experience. But when we get past that to the *reason* for his obedience to the rule, we come to the child's individuality; we can then only appeal to an Ideal which lies in the future. A child's mind, as it stands, is quite unfitted to judge, and this is why *we* must insist; but any of us who have anything to do with children know how in them all there is something which is not themselves as they are, to which we are constantly appealing. And I think we instinctively put out a hand and grasp forward to this continually. A boy who is going to be a clever, a wise, a moral man is not necessarily a clever, wise, or moral child, and yet we find ourselves continually, in our dealings with children, reaching foward not to what a child is going to be, but to what he may become. And this we must respect.

I hope this does not sound overstrained; I should like to try and prove it. There are certain people who "get on" with children in a way quite their own; in our usual thoughtless way we say: "So-and-so understands children thoroughly." He does not; he understands what the children may become, and respects that

possibility. If we listen to this kind of man when he is with children, we shall find that what charms children in him, as different from other people, is that he does not treat them as his inferiors in any way, and that what he says to them, where it is different to what the ordinary person would say to them, has a quality which is quite as charming to ourselves as to the children. It is the appeal to their advance natures that delights them, a glimpse into the wider world of which they are to take possession bye-and-bye. It is not *what* he says, that may be the purest child-nonsense, but the light in which he puts it, the way he invites the child to regard it; this it is that charms the child, because it is the touch on the advance chord, whose vibrations give a mystic joy which the child itself cannot nor wishes to analyse. And the child who gets a joy in this way is the child for whom most may be hoped in the future.

The argument may gain strength in the same way by looking at the books which children love. What is the difference between the child who loves "Alice in Wonderland" and the child who does not? Just the difference that one child is able to appreciate the spirit of the writer, and the other is not. The charm of the "Alices"

is not the fact that Mr. Dodgson could tell a story, the story is the least part in those books, and this is why some children will have none of them. The charm lies in the fact that we, in listening to the books, can take the children on our knee and enjoy the book *together*. We are not "talking down" to the children; we are finding in them a chord which responds to a chord in ourselves, we are almost on level ground. I think we should find this to be true, also, of all the books that we are apt to call children's books, which hold any charm for ourselves. Mr. Kenneth Grahame's sketches and stories, for instance, — a child loves them, where they charm him apart from the actual story, for exactly the same reason as we love them; and in the case of children with whom the story is what principally attracts, we should find that this type of book wearied and bored in so far as they did not possess that quality of being always in advance of themselves to which we may appeal.[1]

[1] If I may be allowed a criticism, I would say that where, in my opinion, Mr. Grahame fails as a writer for children, is where he does "write down" to the children; wherever, for instance, he speaks of their elders. The sketches where grown-up people are never spoken of *as grown-up people* are the really charming work, and, moreover (which is my point here), the work which most delights the children who have in them what is worthy.

And it is not only in the consideration of such books as these that I have mentioned that the argument may be carried out. In these the pathetic humour of the books is the quality which appeals to us and the children alike, — a quality which makes one reluctant to laugh lest one's first impulse was after all the right one, and tears should be the right expression. In poetry, in music, in all beautiful sights and sounds, there is a quality which is universal, which is one with all beauty, and which will appeal to children, even — and indeed because — they understand it not at all, but which at the same time is a real, living factor in the development of their characters.

Now I want to arrive at the point where we may say with conviction that it is this quality *above all others* which we want to develop in children, and it is the appreciation of this quality in children which we want to develop in ourselves, if we are to have any success in our dealings with children. We ought not to take this quality when we find it, and do without it when we do not find it. It is present, it must be, in every child. Every child is *going to be* something; his development cannot stand still; and our business is to appeal to what every child

might be. We can have no control over what a child is going to be except by this appeal. We cannot look into futurity and say: "This or that kind of person you are going to be," we can look at collective experience and say: "This or that kind of person you can be," and this is why we may make and enforce rules, and this is the only excuse we can offer to the child for the enforcing of these rules.

And it is the children who are going, if properly trained, to have it in them to be the finest men and women, who are, while they are children, the least "graspable." We puzzle over children, because we cannot understand them, just where we have no business to try to understand. We try to force a reason where there is no reason, because it is a reason which lies in the future of the man. We all ought to know Wordsworth's "Lesson to Fathers." The child leaving one place where he has lived, for another, is asked by his father, when they are walking down the street, whether he likes the idea of moving; he says, No, and the elder keeps worrying him as to why he does not want to leave his present home; at last the child says, Because there is n't any weathercock on the church of the new place. From pure harassment

he tells a lie: he does not know whether there is a weathercock or no; he probably hardly knows whether there is a church at all; but he does know that he is being bothered, and he does know, instinctively, that he cannot put his real reason into words, it has its root in some quite unchildish part of him, some part non-existent to himself *quâ* child; he catches sight of the weathercock and puts his tiresome interlocutor off with a lie. And we, in a like case, in our silly want of perception, would call such a child insincere and untruthful. We might soon make him so by our idle curiosity about what does not concern us.

It seems an extraordinary thing to say, but it is, I believe, quite true that some people resent individuality in a child. And these, too, people who are often most earnestly anxious to do their best by the children in their charge. I do not mean only that some people are puzzled and perplexed how to act when they come across some strong individual trait in a child's character, though I think that very often such puzzlement and perplexity come from the same cause as does this more personal resentment of which I am speaking. I mean that some people seem to be imbued with the idea that grown-up people "know better" than children, and that

children ought contentedly to take this fact as a reason for doing what grown-up people choose.

We have no right to expect another to take us at our own valuation, unless such valuation has been proved. We prove very early that we are physically stronger than children; but I cannot see what reason we have to suppose that children are to know by looking at us and feeling us that we are wiser or better than they; as soon as they find that they profit by the advice we give them, that we have it in our power to guide and help them, then we shall find children turning to us for guidance and ready to take our advice. But there is a long step between obeying a command, and taking advice or relying on guidance. We say blandly to a child: "I know better than you do," and expect him for that reason to render us obedience; but why should we take it for granted that the child believes us? He may obey us for a dozen reasons other than the only reason which matters, namely, from trust founded on experience. And how can a child trust us if we have not presented to his mind good reason for our control of his actions? A child knows, as soon as he knows anything, that his elders are not infallible; even in the youngest child's limited area of observation he has observed this fact;

and unless we are prepared to justify ourselves to the children around us, we shall assuredly fail in our attempts at discipline. We make mistakes, we know it well, in our dealings with the youngest child, and unless children learn by experience that we have good reasons for our control over them, for the rules we make and insist upon their keeping, we have no right to expect them to render us any obedience at all which is worth the name. Unless a child learns *by experience* that he is better on the whole for a grown-up person's control than he would be without it, our discipline must be superficial and limited only to the area of physical compulsion.

As soon as a child believes in us, believes, that is, in our anxious wish to guide and help him, as soon as he has learnt from experience that our advice is worth having, we shall have gained his trust; and trust is the only good reason a child (or any one else) can have for what is called blind obedience — an obedience which, in reality, is a great deal more far-seeing than any other kind.

The truth of this, many of us, I believe, instinctively feel and, as instinctively, resent. But why should we feel resentment? We have only to acknowledge that we cannot control the mind of a child, that the highest part of his nature does

not come within our powers of compulsion, and it is easy to see what a mistake such resentment is. We know how the love between friends may be spoilt for just the same reason that our discipline with children so often fails, — one friend will ask more of another than he has any right to give, the control of his individuality, and it is this that we are wrong in asking of a child. In the first place it is not in his power to give it, for in the giving of it the individuality would cease to be. The individual mind of a child is the part of him which is pressing on to the infinite, and in this part of him lie his *reasons* for doing things, and — on the face of it — this must be beyond our control, as much in a child as in our own "grown-up" case.

And it is not only out of our control, but more and more out of our reach for help and guidance, the more we ignore the fact of our helplessness to compel. We are striving for the impossible when we seek to compel a child beyond the very limited area of the affairs of the body, and in so doing we only alienate his mind and reason.

Again, I should like to try and prove what I say. We give a child an order, — any order will do, — we say, for instance, "You must be punctual for meals," and we can (more or less) compel the

child to be at the table at a certain time. But having done that, what next, if we are imbued with the spirit, so common to us, that a child ought to obey us because we are older, because we "know better," because we resent in him any opposition to this order, any opinion of his on the matter? The child comes to table, but *why* does he do so? Because we choose, or because he chooses? If the former, what have we done for the character of his "future man"? We are insisting upon a practice which may or may not become a habit, but are we supplying him with any good ground for the obeying of any future rule? Above all, are we getting him into touch with the universal and immortal Law of which our little rule ought to be the type? Surely not. But if, on the contrary, the child obeys us because he chooses, have we not touched his mind, his reason; have we not taught him to look through the rule to the reason of all rule, and given him some beginning of an enduring trust in Law?

If children are brought up to do this, that, or the other because other people think it best, instead of because they themselves think it best, their minds must be left in a harassed condition. Children must begin (I hope to refer to this later on) by occasionally being forced into action, the why

and wherefore of which they cannot understand; but it should be our great care that this state of things should become less and less a part of their lives, so that by the time they grow out of our jurisdiction it has ceased altogether. If we do not so mould our plan of discipline that by degrees a child acts according to such reasons as recommend themselves to his higher and better nature, we shall end, as we begin, by insuring nothing but a spurious obedience to *ourselves*, which is worthless in forming his character.

CHAPTER X

ON what then are we to base our claims to the obedience of those younger than ourselves? What authority do we possess for making the claim which we must make on children, if we are to be of any use to them? For, after all I have said, and in whatever way I may have said it, I would say now that obedience is the supreme virtue, be it in child or man.

If I have seemed in any way to belittle this most important duty, the duty of learning to obey, I have only seemed to do so that I might, in an attempt to point out where our own way of regarding it errs, exalt the actual quality of obedience to its rightful place as the highest of all virtues.

The highest of all virtues and, from that very fact, the most difficult of all to practise correctly; for the man who is perfectly obedient is perfectly virtuous, which is my reason for saying earlier that obedience is not a separate virtue, for it comprises every other virtue.

In my anxiety to prove that this — what I may call — elementary obedience should be only typi-

cal of the great law which governs all, I may have seemed to lay too little stress on the importance of individual obedience in children. Of the great law it is true, as it should be of individual elementary obedience, that we must obey whether we like or no, and it is only through our learning the elementary obedience rightly that we can hope to reach a right comprehension of universal obedience. This is why some are set in authority and others are set in subservience to this authority; this is why the young are placed in the latter, the elder in the former position. But this elementary obedience must not be regarded as an end in itself, looked at in such a light it becomes worthless; only as a means of leading children to learn to obey all rule is individual rule of the slightest use in the formation of the character.

We "master" children's bodies in order to guide their minds, and every occasion on which we insist or force discipline upon a child should be used as an opportunity for teaching him how to master himself hereafter. We do not master children's bodies in order to teach them to obey our rules, but to prove to them that if ever they are to learn true obedience they must learn self-control.

There is only one firm foundation for real obedience of any kind, and that foundation is Trust, and any other kinds of obedience which we must enforce while the real lesson is being learnt are only steps towards the acquiring of true obedience, that which means that we trust the dispenser of rule. And so I think we bring ourselves to the point of seeing that no one (child or otherwise) owes us any kind of real obedience unless we are ourselves trustworthy persons. Unless we have arrived at the point where we never make a rule or give an order except with the firm belief that such rule or order is of real necessity to the child in his character of embryo man, unless we have purged our motives, in giving these rules or orders, of every selfish consideration, we are not worthy of that trust which alone can command true obedience. We may make mistakes over and over again, and if our motive is pure, the child's trust will not weaken. The discipline of a child is a task not to be lightly undertaken, if it be undertaken in a humble and earnest spirit, and it is moreover a progressive task; we are none of us *perfect* disciplinarians, but where we make mistakes it is not hard to retrieve them, and children are more trusting and more lenient than any one has any idea of

who denies to them the right of knowing on what we base our authority when we force upon them the discipline of obedience to our individual rules and orders.

That we must insist upon instant concurrence in these rules and orders is a maxim I need scarcely lay down; the important question to be considered is from what motive we ourselves are acting in so insisting, and what chance we are giving the children in our care of arriving at length at the obedience which rests upon trust.

I do not mean to imply that it is right that a child should always understand why we make a given rule, but that it is right that he should understand why he obeys it, and that it is, moreover, much more right that we should make it our great care that his reason is the only good and useful one, namely, that he chooses to obey us because he trusts us.

If we are to inspire trust in the minds of those who are placed in subservience to us, we need to see clearly on what qualities in ourselves trust would naturally depend. If we are honest, and if we are earnest, we cannot, I believe, go very far wrong. Earnestness brings purity of motive, and if we add to it honesty of method, we see fairly clearly how we ought to stand. In the process

of being honest with the child, honest to the point of confessing ourselves wrong when a mistake has been proved, our purity of motive will become evident to the child; upon this foundation respect and trust must arise.

We can scarcely expect a child to achieve this trust without some experience of ourselves, and meanwhile we must of course — armed with these two weapons, honesty and earnestness — extort the elementary obedience of which I have spoken as but a step to real obedience. The real value of this form of obedience, one which has its limit at the affairs of the body, at, that is, our power of physical compulsion, is that we are teaching the child to master himself, to do what he does not like, to keep himself under; and the real value of this lesson again lies, and lies *only*, in the amount of strength he is acquiring for the battle of self-control, which he will have to wage if he is ever to be a man living in such a manner as to justify his existence.

A child cannot always understand why we give a rule, any more than any one of us can always understand the individual rules which have their origin in universal law; even less can a child be expected to understand, for *we*, as the rulers of children, often make mistakes; but whether the

rule we may make be a good rule or a bad rule, we must of course enforce obedience to it. For this very reason we should take care that our individual rules centre in something in ourselves which is in as much accord with universal law as we can make it. It is better to obey a bad rule for a good reason, than to obey a good rule for a bad reason; and there is only one good reason for obeying any rule, and that is belief in the necessity of law. We may, with the best intentions in the world, make a false step sometimes in our efforts to arrive at the true discipline of children; but if we ourselves are honest, humble, and earnest, our mistakes will only be steps to a higher and clearer view, and children are surprisingly and beautifully content to take their share of the suffering which follows our mistakes.

The honesty of which I have spoken would compel us in our dealings with children to admit at once when we are wrong. In a world of mistakes, I do not think there is a greater one than that most popular idea that a child ought not to know when a grown-up person is at fault. There are two reasons for this,—what I may call a practical and a spiritual reason; in the first place, no child ever thinks any grown-up person infallible,

and the more we endeavour to represent ourselves as such, the less does the child believe in our representation; and, in the second place, honesty is *the* virtue that appeals most strongly to the childish mind. We are apt to call this virtue, when speaking of it in reference to children, justice, but this is not correct. Once a child believes in our honesty, he will stand a great amount of injustice, if by injustice we mean misunderstanding, and the making children obey rules which originate in some mistaken idea of our own. We cannot help being sometimes unjust in our dealing with children; we can help being dishonest.

And when I say we can force ourselves to use complete honesty, I mean by the use of the word honesty, a showing of ourselves *where the child can understand.* I believe we, all of us more or less, misunderstand the terms *honest* and *dishonest.* It is absurd to call a quality honesty which signifies only openness, candour, transparency. It is quite as dishonest to tell a person a truth which he cannot understand, as it is to make any other misstatement. It is the mind which receives, quite as much as the tongue which speaks, which constitutes truth and untruth; and we are foolish to expect a child to understand any

characteristic in ourselves which is the growth *only* of superior experience and development. And when we reflect that side by side with this fact goes the fact also that on the ground of this superior experience and development we are often bound to make our rules, we can see how often — especially in the earlier stages of our discipline — we must insist upon "blind" obedience.

But this fact, again — the fact of our not being always able to be quite open with children — ought to belong to as transient a stage in our discipline as possible, and if we are always open where and when our openness will not be misunderstood, we shall find that our education of children comprises an ever-developing appreciation on their part of the more advanced minds of their elders, making our honesty with them a more and more complete thing.

Children often begin by being what we call dishonest with us for precisely the same reason as we are (what we *do not* call) dishonest with them, for the reason, that is, that we do not understand them and they feel it instinctively. If in our dealings with children we cultivate in ourselves only such qualities as make the understanding of us by children a road to complete honesty between ourselves and them, we shall

end by reaching, both for ourselves and them, an obedience which means that rules are obeyed because we trust and respect their origin, — an origin which centres in that immovable Law which is only irksome when it is disobeyed.

CHAPTER XI

BEFORE going on to our final point, the point I am striving for where we can see that Love and Obedience are one and the same thing, I think we may with advantage look at some of the results to which our increased attention to children is leading.

It has become the fashion to make much of little children, to take them into our lives to a much greater extent, to accord them a great deal of attention. Is the result going to be for the children's greater good? We have put severity and strictness at a discount, we have begun to feel the falseness of any plan of education which does not centre in the mind of the child we are educating; but I think we are in great danger (and I am not now speaking of those who are led in the direction of "child-study"), in the reaction against what was obviously wrong in the former administration, of bringing into the present administration also much that is wrong.

Setting aside natural parental affection which, as we have implied, is not of itself necessarily a benef-

icent or far-seeing quality, children, forty or fifty years ago, were chiefly regarded as rather inconvenient appendages, to be borne with and done the best with until such time as the girls could marry and the boys get into some profession. No one thought of children as a field for observation or analysis; they were just immature beings, all more or less alike, who could be treated and dealt with *en bloc*.

The outward signs of modesty and respect were insisted upon, without very much regard as to whether these outward signs were typical of any grace of mind. Children were treated from the point of view of their elders.

The change which has come about of late years is due largely to our feeling that it is the children's point of view which ought to be considered, or rather we begin to see that we ought to approach the subject from the point of view of what is intrinsically and altogether best or the children, rather than of what is most convenient to ourselves, or even of what system is most likely to mould the children according to our personal idea of what a child ought to be. We have begun to see that children have individual personalities, and that while we can make rules as to their behaviour, we are quite neglecting that

part of their personalities where lie the children's reasons for the keeping of these rules, and we have begun to have a dim idea that it is this part of the child that is the most important part.

With the sudden inroad of children into our grown-up life has come a sudden — and in some ways undue — interest on our part in their sayings and doings. Most of the things a child says and does are of no importance at all, — of the things which are most characteristically childish this is especially true. Any child who is not being taught what reverence means will foist his foolish little conversation on any one who will listen to it, many people will listen to it until it bores them, and then tell the child to be quiet; but our reason for listening is as bad as our reason for telling the child to stop, he ought never to have begun. In the same way, most of the things a child does of himself are foolish: he tears up and otherwise destroys; he plays with the fire, gets into the mud, stretches over the table to get what he wants, hurries into rooms and places before his elders; there again we put up with his actions until they become a nuisance, and then we order him to desist; again our reasons both for allowing and for not allowing are bad, he ought never to have done the things.

These are the things which a child does *because he is a child;* they are words and actions which belong to his childishness, and which will be left behind him as time goes on, if he be properly educated. If his education be neglected, his mind will of course remain vapid and his actions continue to be selfish.

A baby's gayety and merriment are sweet in themselves, it laughs from sheer lightness of heart and the joy of living; but a baby has not left babyhood behind it before, as it is with every other instinct, outside influences begin to affect its merriment. Outside things tend to make the child sad or happy; there begins to be a cause for everything, and the mind comes into play. Directly a child begins to "take in things," the educative process must begin; if we do not take care that it is in an upward direction, there is every certainty that it will be in a downward direction, and this is truer of nothing than of the instinctive *joie de vivre.*

Every word that a child speaks which shows the dawning of thought, the reaching out for information, should be encouraged and paid attention to; every action which is individual should be noted and made use of, where the child is acting and speaking, not as a child, not out of his childish-

ness, but with the individual part of him which is progressive; *there* the educative business of those older than himself comes in.

As an illustration of my meaning, let us take the questions which children ask. Children are apt to ask questions, just as they make any other form of conversation, from a merely empty desire to be making a noise or to be getting attention. A child very often puts its attempts to converse in the form of questions because by that method he feels he can more easily claim attention to himself. He is not interested in what he is saying for its own sake; he is either bored, or anxious to attract attention. We may notice these traits especially in children who usually have to do with the class of persons who are themselves bored with children, but who have the sort of good-nature which we foolishly call a kind heart. If we are earnest in our wish to educate the children we find ourselves in contact with, we shall soon find them leaving off puerile conversation and senseless questioning. Knowing, or rather feeling, that the grown-up person's attention is wholly his when the demand made for it is a reasonable one, the child does not resent inattention, or even a sharp snub, when his demand is a vapid one. We are quite as foolish to bother ourselves to meet a

child's silliness, as we are wrong not to make a real effort to satisfy a child's true search for knowledge. I know an old tale of a little boy hanging out of a third-class railway carriage at rest at a platform, and intently watching and listening to an engine on another train getting up steam. "Mother, what makes the train able to go along?" he asked a woman in the corner of the carriage, a woman very intent on her gossip with a neighbour and consequently quite oblivious to the child; the child repeated his question so often and with so much persistence that at last the woman turned angrily round, "Why, you pay your money and you take your ticket, and get into the train and it goes, and if you don't sit down and keep quiet, I'll box your ears for you." The other day I was travelling with a little boy and his governess, and all through the journey, after the first ten minutes, she was patiently, if somewhat absent-mindedly, answering such questions as, When will it stop raining? How near are we to London? When will the train stop? and so forth. The governess was quite as wrong in her answering as was the mother of the little boy of my story. A questioning *mind* is a thing to be helped and trained; chattering for chattering's sake, be it in the form of converse or of questions, is a thing to be sternly repressed.

And it is the greatest mistake in the world to think that this is sombre doctrine; a child's gayety and merriment have real genuineness in them only when they are caused by something which appeals to his mind. No "crackling of thorns under a pot" is so senselessly crackling as that of the chatter and laughter of children who are laughing at "nothing at all." Like all other qualities which belong to childishness, as such, the untrained gayety of little children very soon degenerates if left to itself, their untrained chatter becomes sheer silliness, their laughter becomes senseless giggling. A child needs to be taught how to be merry and how to be gay, just as it needs to be taught how to be everything else.

I have said this to illustrate what I believe to be the truth, that we are apt in congratulating ourselves on our increased care of children to be not sufficiently careful to see where it is leading the children. What goal are we bent on attaining for them? To what are we directing our energies? When we compare our present method of dealing with children with the method which obtained in our own young days, do we find that the qualities *in us* which decide the details of their education are so very much higher than those which influenced our own parents and grandparents?

We love our children — more or less — those of us who consider we love them most, why do we love them? We content ourselves, so much too easily, with taking the fact that we love our children, even (if we are made in that way) that we love all children, without stopping to consider for one minute of what value, either to the children or to ourselves, this love is, how worthy it is to be called by the name at all.

I am inclined to think that in what I have said earlier about the obedience of children there will seem to many of my readers to be lacking something vital. I hear many a mother saying "But ought not my children to obey me because they love me? Am I wrong in wishing for that?" And I would humbly make answer "Would not your children obey you if they loved you? Could they help obeying you if they loved you?"

We say, and we say rightly, that our children — our own, or those in our care — should obey us because they love us; but we do not say, a thing which is equally true, that our children would obey us if they loved us. And we take this love far too much for granted. I have tried to show that, in its earliest stages in a little child's heart, the quality which we so easily call by the highest name of all, Love, is not love an its true

sense. The obedience which children will give us "because they love us" is a very different thing to the obedience they will give us *when* they love us. We strain the instinctive love of a child (a wonderful gift if we will only develop it) a great deal too much, when we expect it, *of itself*, to draw the great, stern virtue of Obedience in its train.

And does not our failure come because we so inadequately meet the demand the child makes upon ourselves? The children take the first steps; do we go to meet them?

I feel that this question will seem almost absurd to many. Doubt the existence of a mother's love! Is there any other feeling so strong? Now, I think we should pause here and see quite what we mean by "a mother's love," for I want to get to the point where we may see that in asking obedience from children because they love us, we must, if our demand is to have any reason in it, acknowledge that on our conception of our love for them depends the quality of their love for ourselves.

I do not know whether I shall offend many of my readers if I assert that "a mother's love" is not of a quality to demand *anything* of her children unless it is not only the love of a mother

quâ mother, but the love of a mother *quâ* woman. I do believe that the love of a mother *quâ* mother *may* be the most beautiful and unselfish quality in the world, but it must be found in the heart of a woman who is loving and unselfish before she is a mother. And when we come to speak of our love for children (as I think we must do if we are to approach education in the right way) as the love which all grown-up people ought to have for all children, we can see that it is in the weakness of our response to the child's demand to be taught to love rightly, that our failure to command true obedience lies.

[To allow a slight digression: — We can hear it said, "But all people do not and cannot be expected to love children;" and of course we must grant this; or rather we may say that everyone cannot be expected to *like* children. But this only means that every one cannot be expected to like childishness or to understand how to deal with it; surely every one ought to love children in the sense that they wish them to reach their highest possible best. Of course every one is not a suitable person to have the care of children, and such people may well show their love by carefully delegating their responsibilities to others who are more what we call

"naturally" adapted to the care of children. But I need scarcely say that the motives actuating such people should be the highest, and I need scarcely say also that we are not always actuated by the highest motives when we do delegate such responsibilities.]

Let us then see that our love is real love before we begin to ask impossibilities of the children. Is our love of such a quality that we may demand as its response such love from the children as will bring naturally in its train obedience to our wishes? Is our conception of Obedience such that in demanding obedience from the children we are acting in their best and highest interests? Do we stand in such relationship to them that to love us means to them to love obedience, because we have taught them that to love obedience means to attain virtue?

When all is said and done, there remains to us this: and it remains in precisely the same degree as before we began to sift the matter at all: the little children are our delight and our joy because we love them, we do not love them because they are our delight and our joy; we may analyse and sift and chop logic as we will, there stands the mother and her baby in her arms, and we may go down before them in sheer, instinctive, wor-

ship. We can find this beautiful thing everywhere, and we may safely make it our best standing-ground for every argument, and our brightest light in which to conduct our closest analysis, and, do what we may, we cannot touch it with the fringe of our understanding.

But we must not leave it at that, we dare not, we must insist that this beautiful love of mother and child reaches its perfection in the heart of the wise rather than in the heart of the unwise. We must insist that this love, perhaps the most beautiful and mysterious thing in creation, is given to us with a purpose that does not find in this love itself its ultimate and highest satisfaction and perfection.

Where is this satisfaction to be found? How is this perfection to be reached?

There is only one way of asking and of answering these questions with any hope of real success. To get clear away from our own little, miserable, personal conception of love, and look straight into the dazzling face of that Love which rules the world. It is the spark of this real thing which, lying in the heart of every creature born of woman, I have ventured to call "mind." Let us, in our self-analysis, try to shake ourselves free of all that clogs our understanding and blinds

our eyes, and grasp firmly this one fact: that on our comprehension of Love depends the development of the minds of the little children around us.

Let us see that in the heart of Love lies Obedience, and that the obedience of love is Virtue.

APPENDIX

I BEGAN this book about two years ago, and through ill-health I have been unable to finish it until now. During that time I have been constantly haunted by the feeling that methods for educating our children are developing around us at such a pace that if people who care do not sit down calmly in some quiet corner and look the matter steadily in the face, and act upon their reflections, we shall find ourselves rushed into a state of affairs which we shall bitterly regret.

And now I have again read through, re-cast, and revised what I wrote many months ago, and though I mean it all every bit as much as I did, and feel it all more keenly, still the thought that rises in my mind is — What good to talk to parents when every day children look less and less to their parents, less and less to individual love and care and tenderness, and more and more to a system. And the feeling of sadness that such thoughts bring belong more to one's regard of our girls. Our system of boys' education is more or less a thing accomplished; the faults in it have reached such a pitch that we are beginning, just beginning, to feel that in sending a boy to Eton or Harrow we are not perhaps fulfilling the *whole* duty of parentage. But the extraordinary thing is that while a certain few are beginning

uneasily to turn in their seats and wonder what is wrong, and whether it *is* a good thing to treat young things by such a system of education that the odds are they will lose the best of their individuality; while here and there a father or mother (even sometimes, oh, blessed combination! — a father *and* a mother) are beginning to see that they owe something far higher to their boys than they ever dreamed of before, — while this is beginning for the few, the many are hurrying to a point where girls' schools will be in danger of gathering into them all the faults of administration which characterise boys' schools.

In the past it has been considered a suitable thing that boys should go to school at a comparatively early age; this I believe to be right, right that is to a certain extent; I am inclined to think that most boys should go away from home at the age when childhood has become boyhood, though *by no means* all boys. But in the consideration of this matter we have turned the whole thing completely round. We regard it in the light of the boys going to school, not in the light of the boys going from home. If in the consideration of our boys' education any question arises, it is not the question, "Will, on the whole, looking at the matter all round, my boy be better at school than he would be at home?" so much as, "Is it possible that, for some extraordinary reason, my boy cannot go to school?" Nine times out of ten the right answer to the first question would be, yes. I think that nine times out of ten a boy does need the discipline of the social life which he gets in the larger

world of school. But if we looked at the matter differently, if we saw parentage in a truer light, sending our boys to school would be a very different matter to us to what it is. It would not mean a shuffling off our shoulders, on the first opportunity, of a burden which belongs to them by right, on to the shoulders of others. There is a species of responsibility which we are quite right to delegate to others when we send our boys to school; there are points where the school-master is an expert, where any parent would be but an amateur; but these are not the points of responsibility of which I am speaking.

Elsewhere I have said my say on this matter, and I cannot repeat it here; but I do feel drawn to putting in a protest on two points: first, on the increasingly early age at which we send our little boys away from us; and secondly, on the whole question of girls going to school at all.

To say that, in a general way, boys at a certain age are better in a wider atmosphere than home can give them, and to say that the sooner a boy goes to school the better, is to say two widely different things. If we honestly think that on the whole, and taking the average home and the average school, little children are better away from home, I think it is our absolute duty to make up our minds clearly *why* this is so. Is it a failure of the homes? or is it a fact that home is not the right place for children? I mean are the people right who say that children are better nurtured by a system carried on by experts, than by individuals who are ama-

teurs and whose only claim to consider themselves educators is a natural claim, the fact of parentage?

I think it is the cowardly way in which most of us shirk looking a problem in the face that leads the majority of persons to take advantage of any arrangement which means ease and convenience to themselves. In a life made up of problems, problems which are put before us on purpose that, in the solving of them, we may see our way clearer and clearer, in such a life we shall always find a certain number of people deliberately shirking their share of the hard work, and content to slide into any arrangement made for them by those who tackle the difficulties.

The problem of what to do with children is a very difficult one; its difficulties are largely enhanced, as I have shown much earlier in this book, by our false and foolish outlook upon marriage; but even granting a certain amount of wisdom in this respect, the difficulty is great. Many parents do find it an extremely difficult thing to live their own lives, if their little children remain at home after they have left the nursery. This is to say that in many, I wonder if I should be going too far if I say in most, households the children-question is not faced at all. While the children are quite little, the nursery-system provides for them; when they out-grow the nursery, the school-system provides for them. The ethics of parentage as a study is completely shirked.

If we are content thus to put the responsibility of the moral education of our children into other hands, it is

not surprising that our lives grow more and more independent of childhood, that more and more we find our individuality, our individual part in life, in no way depending upon the fact that we are parents. It is not surprising that the country is full of schools which are partly nurseries and partly a field of preparation for larger schools; it is not surprising that boys leave home younger and younger.

If we believe that the notion is a right one which upholds the advisability of children being removed from individual care, and placed under an expert system as early as possible, we may with a clear conscience arrange our little family on lines which coincide with such notions. If, on the other hand, we believe that parentage has in itself something uplifting, and ennobling to ourselves, if we believe that it brings responsibilities which we do wrong to shirk, then we must see that to fall in with a system based on such a notion as I have mentioned above, is wrong to the last degree. It is because we do not look at the question squarely, because we do not make up our minds what it is we really mean by childhood, by parentage, by responsibility, and by all that these entail upon us, that we weakly sit down on the most comfortable chair handy, — a chair pushed forward by hands in which we have placed our responsibilities. And there we sit, and never think about the matter at all.

It is the barrack system of education that is going to be the danger for us; it *is* a danger for our boys, it is becoming a danger for our girls. When we talk of the

"barrack system" of school, or hear it spoken of, we mean, and the speakers usually mean, that our schools generally are in danger of becoming worked on a system which is designated by this term, "barrack." But I mean here that *all* school systems must, in the very fact of their being, be worked on a principle which may stultify a great deal of what is most important in children's lives. By the time a child has passed early childhood, that is, if his early childhood has been passed in constant, loving, and wise communion with his parents, and with those older than himself who are members of his home, he will have formed such ties of love and respect to his home, his higher nature will have got so many roots firmly fixed in what is highest and best in the teaching of home, that he may safely be sent away to learn those lessons which a larger sphere can teach and which are necessary for a boy to learn. We do not, or rather we ought not to send our boys to school because we want to send them to school, because, that is, we want to send them from home, but because school represents that wider life which is necessary for he development of their characters as men.

This wider life is not necessary to little children, in itself it is bad for them; the lessons it teaches are not the lessons that little ones need, and however loving and gentle may be the hands that guide and rule a school, they cannot have the quality of the hands of the father and the mother, of the home. Numbers of children cannot be treated *in the same way* that a few can be treated. The way may be good, may be excellent in

its right sphere, but it is not *the same*, and its right sphere is not where little children are dealt with.

And, quite apart from the little children themselves, even supposing (and it would be the falsest of suppositions) that the children themselves were the better for being sent to school; the home suffers incalculably by this system. We are coming to a point where the home is not the natural place for children. The children and the arrangements made for them are temporary excrescences; we are slowly, but, oh, so surely, losing sight of the fact that a home without children is a home without the very best that life offers us, the very best of beauty, of tenderness, of self-denial, of discipline, of careful watching of ourselves and consequently of the highest training for ourselves. We are doing *ourselves* an inestimable injury when we deprive ourselves of the presence of children.

I believe that the problem of what to do with girls is a more difficult one than the question of the boys; I believe that the reasons for which we send our quite little boys away from home are, generally speaking, bad reasons;[1] but I believe that it is an increasingly difficult problem how girls are at once to be brought up so that they can be "independent," if necessary, and so that they may lose none of the best qualities of womanhood.

[1] It is scarcely necessary to say that there are many cases where little boys cannot live with their parents, where certain disadvantages would out-weigh the advantages of the home-life, or where circumstances make home-life impossible. For these cases a good school is the best solution of the difficulty.

But it is one thing to say this — it is one thing to say that the old-fashioned style of bringing up our girls will do no longer, and it is another to drift into a state of things in which all around us are growing up institutions which exists only because we have helplessly looked round for "a way out of the difficulty." We have not faced the problem ourselves; we have hurriedly taken a solution offered to us by others, and we are not caring to ask whether the solution has not in it perhaps as much of evil as the old plan. We see the convenience to ourselves, and we do not look further into the matter at all. Acting from such motives as these, can we be surprised if the result will be that our girls' schools will gather into them all the faults of administration which characterise the boys' school? Even a greater danger lies ready for us, for boys' schools have a definite *raison d'être*; boys do need a wider life in a sense that girls do not.

There are, I think, two aspects of this matter to be considered. First, as to the schools themselves. What sort of place ought a girls' school to be? Having made up our minds to the answer to this question, let us look at the girls' schools growing up in such numbers around us, and see if they agree in any way with our ideal. Why do these schools exist? Is it because we ourselves, in our longing for the highest and best for our girls, have demanded places for their education with such and such characteristics; or is it because we have helplessly evaded the question of girls' education in general, and have drifted into sending our girls in par-

ticular to schools which have been evolved out of a system founded upon this general helplessness of ours to contend with the difficulty?

The schools, no doubt, exist in answer to a demand of some sort; but what sort of demand? The demand of clear-sighted prudence based upon our love for our children, or the demand of cowardly helplessness based on a short-sighted shirking of our responsibilities? What we ask for we shall get. Are we asking for places where our girls will find the highest training for themselves, or are we asking for places where we can, with some sort of a clear conscience, deposit our responsibilities for others to deal with?

Out of what sort of need have the girls' schools of the present day been evolved?

I think we ought, without delay, to set ourselves honestly to ask these questions. The school which takes the child from the parents' hands with the intention of carrying on the work which the parents have started; the school which, so to say, *meets* the parent on the road and takes the hand of the child and leads her on in the same path, is a very, very different kind of place to the school into which the child is shot, bag and baggage, body and soul, to find there her only guidance, her only training. This last sort of school is complete in itself; it does not depend on, does not hinge on the home in the slightest degree. A child once in such a school becomes at once one of many; the tie which should bind her to home and *on which is founded her individuality* does not exist, or if it ever existed is rudely

broken; whatever the home may be, the child's connection with it must be intermittent, and is, from that fact, a harassing element in the child's life; for once a child is at school the larger part of her life belongs to the school, and the home-influence must be one with the school-influence, if it is to stand at all.

The tie which binds a child to home is a very strong one; it is the strongest influence in its young life; even to a bad or careless home a child will cling: I hope I have made it to some extent clear in what I have said earlier that the love of little children for those older and stronger than themselves is a very powerful feeling, and, while they are quite little, they will trust and try to love in spite of everything. For this reason, if a home be good, if the parents be truly loving, a child may be sent to a good school with every hope that, even though its life will become largely one with the school-life, even though that school-life must have in it elements which work against individuality, still, woven into and through and through the child's life will be the love of home, the ineffaceable memory of lessons which can only be learnt at home, which will stand the child in entirely good stead, not only at school but through the whole of life. Granted this love, granted this memory, the lessons to be learned in the wider life can do nothing but good; the elements in school life, which I have said work against individuality, will — tempered and held in check by the individual and peculiar love of home — only make such impressions as are good and healthful ones to gain, impressions which we all need to gain in our walk through life.

But with the best home in the world, with the tenderest and most careful teaching in a child's early years, she will not have a fair chance if she goes to the average girls' school of the present day. I say this unhesitatingly. I say that, owing to our shirking, as we do, the whole question of childhood, boyhood, and girlhood as it relates to ourselves, we have demanded, and we are getting, the wrong kind of places as schools to which to send our girls. Owing to the fact that year by year good homes (and by a good home I mean a household in which the children are the highest consideration in it) get scarcer, so the demand for the right kind of school gets weaker, so more and more readily we accept the wrong kind of school.

The schools are not to blame; we have asked and we have received; the school is part of a system, we are individuals. No one can blame a system; but every one may blame the individuals to whose influence the system is due.

We shall not have the right kind of school while we have the wrong kind of home; we shall not have the right kind of home while we have a wrong kind of standard of childhood in general, and of our duties to our own children in particular.

I have said earlier, and I think it is a fact with which few will be likely to disagree, that the administration of our public schools leaves much to be desired; we most of us accept this fact, some few are looking eagerly around for a remedy, most of us take the public school system as we find it, considering that on the whole it

has in it more good than harm, and that that is as much as one can expect in this world. But because we follow this course in the case of our boys, that is no reason why we should allow ourselves to concur in the gradual building up of a faulty system for our girls. Seeing as we do the faults in the public school system as it at present exists — the result of generations of parents, boys, and keepers of schools — we might at least make an effort to keep out these faults in the system for our girls' education. That our girls have not been educated at all in the past is no reason why they should be unwisely educated now. And this will surely happen if we do not use the knowledge we possess about boys' schools, as they at present exist, to insist upon girls' schools being kept clear of tendencies which will gradually develop in their system all the faults of the administration of the public schools of to-day.

And now I come to the second aspect of this matter of the education of girls.[1] As I said, the first question was as to the schools themselves. The second is as to the girls themselves. What is our aim in our efforts to educate our girls? What results are we trying to arrive at?

I am very much afraid that in answer to a question such as this, whether such question referred to our sons or to our daughters, we should most of us, if we answered honestly what is in our minds say, "My aim is that my son, or my daughter, should turn out as like

[1] May I repeat that in the use of the word education I do not mean, I never mean, instruction. Instruction is a part of education, but in my use of the word education, I mean "bringing up."

other boys and girls as possible. I look round and I am anxious that they should not be behindhand, and my efforts are to keep them as much in line as I can manage." I am not now speaking of this or that "item" of education; we do not mind our sons and daughters coming to the front in any part of their education which involves competition with others; but, looking at the matter broadly, we want them to take their places comfortably among the average; we would rather shrink from putting them with any people or into any circumstances where they might develop any such qualities as might mark them out as "peculiar."

This is not a very high ideal, and if this is our demand, it is not to be wondered at that schools are what they are. We are contented with so little for our children that the system evolved from our demands can hardly be expected to be a system with a very high standard of what a man or a woman should be.

There are certain qualities which one can gain in a society which are unobtainable for us while we move only among two or three. In this way girls and boys can learn at school lessons, and very admirable lessons, which they could never learn at home, and they can learn them thoroughly. And we are arriving at a point with our girls (we have many of us long since arrived at it with our boys) where we shall be content that these qualities should be the only ones they possess, these lessons the only ones they shall learn. They are qualities and lessons which belong to any average girl or boy brought up in an average good school.

Now I want to say here that, granting the demand which parents make upon the world around them when they call it in to educate their children for them, the schools make a most noble response. It is a difficult matter to undertake the education of the young as the work of your life, unless you are a person of high aims; it is difficult to carry it on without developing your best qualities; and for this reason the schools cannot be praised too highly. But they are what the parents make them. They are composed of children who are what the training (or the lack of training) at home has made *them*. And, moreover, they are ruled by men and women who are human, who can err, who are not always governed by the highest motives.

In saying what I do of those who make education their life's work, I feel it to be particularly true of those who work in girls' schools. The education of girls is a comparatively new thing; the profession of mistress in a girls' school is a comparatively new one. Women do not become mistresses unless they feel themselves fitted for the task. This is infinitely less true in the matter of the education of boys, and we are greatly in danger of its becoming less and less true in the education of girls, simply because we are greatly in danger of allowing the same faults to become a part of the system of girls' schools as are now a part of the system of boys' schools. We are in danger, that is, of limiting our standard, our ideal, to the limit of the average.

I do not intend here to go into the question of what an ideal woman should be; in what way she should be

like, in what way she should differ from an ideal man. I do not want to thrust myself into that ever-heated controversy. I should like to say once for all, and to clear my ground of future argument, that I am on the side of those who say that a woman is not, never has been, never will be in the least like a man, any more than a man is, has been, or ever will be in the least like a woman. Moreover, I am on the side of those who aver that the principal duties of a woman, *as a woman*, are those of wife and mother. Having said that, I would say that in the question of the education of our girls, the great thing we have got to do is to make them worthy human beings. Nature has made them women; nature will, if circumstances are agreeable, make them wives and mothers; it is our business, seeing that they already are women and are likely, without any interference on our part, to become wives and mothers, to see that we may bring them up to be human beings for the possession of whom the world will be the better. Seeing, however, that though nature has made them women, circumstances which are stronger than nature will prevent a good many of them being wives and mothers, and, further, that we have no idea while they are children who of them will be wives and mothers, it is our absolute duty in bringing up our girls to fix our eyes chiefly on an ideal for them as human beings.

If we bring up our children — girls and boys — with our eyes firmly fixed on definite ideals and, in our training of them, leading them definitely on towards these ideals, we shall find them growing up under our hands

into men and women; the boys becoming no less men, the girls becoming no less women, because we have set the same ideals before them both. The difference will be in them, not in us, not in the ideals. If one takes two normal children, a girl and a boy, and discourses to them of virtue, telling stories, perhaps, or recounting incidents which illustrate this or that virtue, we shall find that any ideal — courage, honesty, perseverance — will appeal equally to both; but we shall find the boy looking at one aspect of this or that virtue, the girl looking at another. Bravery to the boy will mean action, to the girl endurance; honesty to the boy will mean justice, to the girl mercy; perseverance to the boy will mean push, to the girl standing still. If you tell a story of hospital-life in war, let us say, a story where a life is saved, a soldier brought in at great risk; to the boy it will mean the carrying in of the helpless man, to the girl it will mean the receiving of the wounded into her care.

This is entirely right, and this result is reached without any interference on our part. I think we may safely say that we do not need to *develop*, in our education of the young, the differences of sex; there is nothing in all nature stronger than this. Our wildest efforts cannot subdue it, though they may distort it.

But though we do not need to develop the difference of sex as to *being*, I think we are bound to consider it as to *doing*. It seems to me that, looked at straight in the eyes, so to speak, we cannot come to the conclusion that the education of one who is to become a woman,

can be identical with that of one who is to become a man; we cannot come to the conclusion that the education of one who is to become a man can be identical with that of one who is to become a woman.[1]

But be this how it may, let our opinion of what a woman ought to be, what work she ought to do, what is her place in the world be what it may, — the point I wish to press, the point which I seem to see gradually slipping out of sight, is *whatever* our ideal is, that ideal we ought to take steps to compass in the education of our own particular girls. Do let us shake ourselves free of the slothful habit which is growing upon us of letting the average be the standard at which we are aiming. For to what is this standard due? It is due to the average struck by the result of accumulated careless-

[1] In writing thus of boys and girls, or men and women, I should like to say that I am, in taking my examples, speaking always of the normal. One knows, of course, that there are, here and there, men we call "effeminate," and women we call "masculine;" we call a boy, here and there, girlish, and a girl, "a regular hoyden," meaning that her tastes and actions are apt to be boyish. But, in one way these exceptions only go to prove the rule more strongly; for a very slight divergence indeed from the normal is enough to dub a man "effeminate" or a woman, masculine" — for a man's hair to be a shade longer than is usual, his hands a shade whiter, his voice a shade gentler; for a woman to walk with a stride, to speak loudly and decisively, any of these are quite enough for the purpose; and I think that this proves that as a rule men are very manly, women very womanly. If we look closely, moreover, at the reasons for which these distinctions are observed, we shall find them very superficial; no woman is really like a man, *as man*, no man is really like a woman, *as woman*.

ness and cowardice. It finds expression in a system of education provided for us as a supply for the demand we make. With such a poor, weak demand what can we expect of the supply? It is, as a matter of fact, as I have implied earlier, far, far better than we have any right to expect; but it will not improve. Why should it? That it is good at all, is due, as I have also implied, to the fact that *at present* those who work our schools for girls are energetic and enthusiastic, loving the work for its own sake. But that will not last in anything like the degree of its present standard. How can it? These pioneers of girls' education cannot work alone, they *must* have a response from the other, the parents', side, — a response more worthy than just a falling in with the system provided for them. Already, owing to the weakness, an ever-increasing weakness, of family life, the schools have much in them that many of us must see to be faulty. As years go on, these faults are bound to develop, because the system will be left to itself; it will not be dominated by a strong public opinion, a public opinion centring in, having its very being in the love of parents for children. According to the quality of this love will the schools of the future stand or fall.

I shall by some, I fancy, be accused here of writing as though it were a necessary conclusion to arrive at that girls should go to school to find their education. Here, again, one plunges into controversy which it is rather my aim to avoid. I do know that if girls are sent to school, it should be our especial, our greatest endeavour to send them to a school which will carry on our own idea

of education. I do know that unless the home life centres in the children, unless the children are surrounded by a love which recognises their supreme importance as factors in the being of the world, girls will never get properly educated at all. I do know this; experience and very deep thought have convinced me on these points. But I do not know whether girls ought to go to school or not. I know what I personally believe; I believe that the more girls are at home the better; I believe that girls do not need the lessons of the wider life which school gives to anything like the extent that boys do; I believe that a man's life calls for different qualities to those that a woman's life calls for. But my object in writing this book is not to put my opinions forward, but to lay before my readers conclusions which are the result of experience and years of thought, — conclusions which have become a part of my being. Opinions may change from year to year; and as to one's opinion about girls going to school, one can only say, it depends on the girl, it depends on the school, it depends on the home. And I would fain free myself of the criticism — one I became familiar with on a book which I wrote about boys' schools.

"The author apparently thinks that it is an absolute necessity that a boy should go to school; no other form of education seems to occur to her as possible."

What I believe is this, and I believe it as a principle, not as an opinion, that if we did our duty by our children while they were children, we should not find ourselves asking whether girls should go to school or no; we should find ourselves going straight for the life best fitted

for the particular girl in our charge. Armed with our love, armed with the experience gained through careful and humble study of our duties towards the object of our love, we should choose for our children the path, walking in which would give them the best chance of reaching the ideals we have kept before our eyes since their birth.

The remedy for the difficulty lies in our own hands, our own as parents. Let us ask, and we shall get. Those who ask now do get. There are schools in the country which work *with* the parents. There are parents in the country who will insist upon the best for their children, who will insist upon a carrying on of their own ideals in the education of their children. To the demand there is an answer. The remedy of the difficulty is to *care*, to care for the children; and caring, which after all is only another word for loving, to ask. Beyond a shadow of doubt, the answer will come.

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